[COVER]

Property of the Estate of

A. Graham Brown

[illustration]

N. W. Cayley [illustrator signature]

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

[INSIDE COVER – BLANK]

25th September 1948

(20)

I had heard that a pair of Brolgas were nesting on a swamp on Nangana property. So with a warning telephone call a few days previously, I set off after lunch fully equipped to take what photos I could get.

It was a very windy day with light cloud in front of the sun. The road out was rotten and I felt more as if I have made a rough sea passage by the time I had arrived. However the slow speed enforced by the track allowed me to pick up a new song, which proved to be that of the BROWN SONGLARK. Many more were seen and heard later at the swamp.

Around the homestead were WILLIE-WAGTAILS, SPARROWS, and the incessant calls of the PALLID CUCKOO. I followed Jim Drimmouth [guess] in a Jeep, until

[25th September 1948] we got as close to the swamp in my
car as we could. I then left it there,
transferred to the jeep and we went down
a hundred yards or so from the swamp.
As we walked over the brow of the hill
there was the female sitting in the middle
of the swamp. Immediately she came off
and stalked off to join her mate at
the other end of the dam or swamp. Jim [guess]
left me and I walked on down to a
stony barrier over- [photo]
looking the Swamp.
At this end was
a dam and the
swamp gradually
dried as it went
westward so that
the ground at the far end was firm and
dry. The photo shows this dam, and just
on the skyline the trees surrounding Nangana
homestead. The swamp extends half a mile
to the right in the photo.
The birds to be seen from that

[25th September 1948] look-out were MAGPIES, MAGPIE-LARKS, PIPITS, SPUR-WINGED PLOVER, RAVENS and WHITE-FRONTED CHATS. Also out in the swamp were BLACK DUCK and few pairs of MOUNTAIN DUCK. On the dam were two small brown and white duck with massive bills which were diving. I took them to be young of the Mountain Duck. Also out in the swamp were flocks of "waders" – I am getting almost desperate about waders and these on the swamp were as far as I can say the Common Sandpiper. But I must bag some specimens.

[photo]

[25th September 1948] [photo]

In the meantime the BROLGAS were stalking sedately about at the other end of the swamp paying no attention to me – nor did they do so as I examined their nest which was 40 yards out in the swamp. It was built on a slightly raised piece of ground and contained two eggs – very dirty. The two photographs show the swamp around the nest, and the nest and eggs themselves. The birds kept well away and as the surrounding country was so wet, no thought of taking the birds was entertained

[25th September 1948] Then I walked along the paling fence
which runs through the swamp and
divides Nangana and Mt Hesse properties.
On the latter side it was dry, and I
got a very good view of the waders. As
I got to the dry western end of the swamp
a STUBBLE QUAIL flushed up from my
feet. SKYLARKS were singing above –
and I thought it a very much better song
than the Brown Songlark though so many
compare the two. On my walk back to
my car I disturbed a STRIATED FIELD –
WREN from a tussock and [photo]
came across the Magpie's
nest in a windmill. It
contained two eggs, one
half the size of the other.
I returned via
Turkeith where there were
many birds as there
always are in that
oasis; BLACKBIRDS, GOLDFINCHES,
PALLID CUCKOOS + GANG-GANGS.

26th September 1948

(15)

(32)

I was off early that morning to Lake Corangamite where I heard that the gulls were nesting. Arriving at about 8.0 am I first did a sweep across a promontory and back via the shore to the car.

There were many WHITE-FRONTED CHATS, SKYLARKS, YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS, GOLDFINCH MAGPIES, SPURWINGED PLOVER, WHITE-FRONTED HERON SPARROWS and RAVENS. This in fact is very much what one would expect to see in a brief time in this country; all these birds are very common. On the water were MUSK DUCK – a party of 5 and I wondered if this was not a family party – and BLACK DUCK. A [photo] few SWANS were present but not very many. Along the shore flew a small flock of RED – [CAPPED DOTTEREL]

[26th September 1948] Capped DOTTEREL.

I then had a good look at the various islands just off shore which were covered with SILVER GULLS and were obviously where they were breeding. There were about fifteen of these islands and going on observations made later there were roughly 300 nests on each island. This makes 4,500 nests and a nesting success of roughly 1½ gives 7000 new gulls this year from this locality.

I picked what I thought would

[photo]

[26th September 1948] [photo]

be a suitable island and returned
to the car for refreshments and for
my paraphernalia. On the way there
a pair of STRIATED FIELD-WRENS flew
out of some rush tussocks and
sailed away down wind just above
the top of the rushes to disappear down
again in a flash.

The first Island I chose proved
to be difficult of access and the
second ~~ed~~ needed no deeper wading

[26th September 1948] than to the knee. The first thing that I saw as I dumped my gear down on arrival was a Swan's nest with five eggs, and a picture of which is shown.

Then a rough survey of nests on the island. I counted roughly half of them and found many young were out and many eggs were chipping. Then a few close ups of nests with eggs and young from 15 inches. The day was a much as

[photo]

[26th September 1948] [photo]
it had been – sun – clouded lightly
over and a very strong west wind.
And then with three uprights
and piece of hessian I fashioned a
form of hide right beside the swan's
nest and directed at a gull's nest six
feet away. But for me trying the
wand was too much. I had picked
no lee position the hessian flapped and
the hide leant in the wind. The gap
for the camera widened and the wary

[26th September 1948] gulls could see me plainly, sitting uncomfortably hunched inside smoking and eating apples (at least I being inside was out of the wind). The flapping hide as well as the camera bellows made that instrument vibrate and shake.

I stayed for an hour and though gulls came as close as ten feet, that gull did not come to that nest. I took a photo before I left the hide and the camera movement was so great that the nest could scarcely be recognized in the result.

Then I packed up and came home for lunch. It was my first time in a hide – a complete failure – but great fun and a few lessons have been learnt.

(18) In the afternoon I went down to the valley beyond Mimosa at Gellibrand. It was quiet and sheltered from the

[26th September 1948] wind. It was also almost birdless!
As well I slipped and jammed my
hand between two logs – very luckily not
breaking a finger.

Birds noted down were SCARLET ROBIN
MAGPIE, YELLOW ROBIN, KOOKABURRA, GREY FANTAIL
FAIRY-MARTINS, BROWN THORNBILL, WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER
WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER, YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATER,
FAN-TAILED CUCKOO, RED-TIPPED PARDALOTE, NATIVE THRUSH
MOUNTAIN THRUSH, CRIMSON ROSELLA, WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-
WREN
BLUE-WREN and RUFOUS BRISTLE-BIRD. The latter
I watched closely for half-an-hour after an
hours waiting had been necessary for it
to appear. I got a beautiful view of it
and its actions as it ran in and out
amongst the bracken. This was the only
observation worth while (except recording the
Mountain Thrush in that locality) in the
whole afternoon. But it was a fine
days work as a whole and including
the day before it was a very fine
week-ends birding. And it was the plains
that gave me the material!

10th October 1948 This afternoon we went for a quiet drive out over Murray's Hill. The high plateau there, in Yeodene, was carrying very many MAGPIES and SILVER GULLS. There were a large number of immature amongst the former and some paddocks were thick with them. The paddock along side may be thick with Silver Gulls but it is almost true to say the two species did not appear to mix in the one paddock. Perhaps the Magpies paddocks were more tussocky but it is hard to find a difference in the ground. And this we also noticed at Warncoort, in the paddocks north of the main road.

Ball's Dam was well populated with many species but with no over-whelming numbers of any one species. Perhaps the commonest was the Dusky MOORHEN which is apparently very variable in numbers. Many COOT but only a very few SWAMPHEN round the edge or perched on posts. SWANS had well grown cygnets

[10th October 1948] and there were many BLACK DUCK out in the centre. I suspect there was also another species but I could not fix it. A few MOUNTAIN DUCK were round the edge. LITTLE GREBE were there in pairs and the matter of telling them apart from the Hoary-headed is much simpler in summer than winter. I was rather surprised to find a single GREAT CRESTED GREBE on the water. I should have thought the water was too shallow. On the fringes were SPUR-WINGED PLOVER and up to twelve Little Pied CORMORANTS. SWALLOWS and a WILLIE-WAGTAIL completed the list for that spot.

We turned left to Warncoort and proceeded north across the plains till the road defeated us. But whenever there were trees – pines, plantations or open forest there were PALLID CUCKOOS. We must have seen nearly 20 in half an hour. They are extraordinarily plentiful this year – as certainly anyone being in Colac could tell.

13th October 1948
(42)

Having been put off work for another week we decided to adopt the very bright suggestion and go and stay the rest of the week with Walter and Marion Hopkins at Langkoop near the South Australian Boundary. So at 10 o'clock we set off (an hour late) in teeming rain which continued until we were the other side of Camperdown. There in the plantations were NOISY MINERS and EASTERN ROSELLAS.

At Mt Emu Creek we turned up through Noorat to Mortlake and from there out onto the Hamilton road. On the plains were WHITE-FRONTED HERONS, a GOSHAWK, FAIRY MARTIN MAGPIE LARK, SWALLOWS, PIPITS, MAGPIES, SKYLARKS and GOLDFINCHES. At Hexham was a flock of RED-BACKED PARROTS which were delightful to see again. Also some white cockatoos which I was fortunately suspicious of, looked twice and found them to be CORELLAS. They were in small parties as well as one flock of five [guess] so – comparatively tame I was to see many more of them before the day

[13th October 1948] was out.

Through Hexham, Caramut and Penshurst to Hamilton is flat but rich and pleasant country to pass through. At Hamilton we had lunch (Michael behaved himself admirably at his first "hotel lunch") and resumed our way to Coleraine. Here the country became rolling in nature, apparently a plateau divided up by wide deep river valleys. From Coleraine to Casterton began that lovely open forest that I remembered from Hamilton north to the Grampians and here we saw SPUR-WINGED PLOVER, TREE MARTINS, RAVENS and STARLINGS.

From Casterton we took the Apsley road for 45 miles to Langkoop school. The first part followed the Glenelg R. which then was swollen with muddy water from recent torrential rains. Then we climbed up into scrub country which continued with us nearly all the way. This type of "scrub" which is poor, stunted eucalypt reminded me of that seen in our trip from

[13th October 1948] Mackay to Proserpine in Queensland. In it
we saw a number of birds (including large
numbers of Corellas) – SWAMP HARRIERS (Glenelg R.)
WHISTLING EAGLE, CRIMSON ROSELLA, KOOKABURRA,
PALLID CUCKOO, DUSKY WOOD-SWALLOW, BLUE WREN,
YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILL, NATIVE THRUSH, BROWN TREE-
(29) CREEPER.

Derrill [guess] was 5 miles down the
road from the Langkoop school and
we arrived at 4.30. It is a lovely
property consisting almost entirely of
that open forest with superb red gums
standing on brilliant green grass and
among them many recently shorn sheep.
The homestead is built of Mt Gambier
stone and looks SE over a swamp
½ mile in diameter in which stand
many dead trees and around the edge
are red gums. The day was
showery with a fierce SW wind
so birds were not much in evidence
but as soon as I had had some

[13th October 1948] tea I set out to see what there was
in what light remained.
On the swamp were one
BLACK CORMORANT, many L. PIED CORMORANTS,
COOT, EASTERN SWAMPHEN, BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL,
SPUR-WINGED PLOVER, STRAW-NECKED IBIS,
YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL (two nests), WHITE-NECKED
and WHITE-FRONTED HERON, SWAN, MOUNTAIN DUCK,
(95) WOOD DUCK (new) GREY TEAL, BLACK DUCK. After
stalking a flock of WOOD-DUCK, feeding on the
edge of the swamp I returned to the
house after a very good first day
convalescing!
14th October 1948 Langkoop. I had "Lassie" saddled
44 up for me. She was a docile creature
with a great fondness for grass and
home so that she had continually to be
corrected. I had always imagined
a horse to be an ideal animal for use
in ornithology. But it is not. The horse
has to be halted (which takes time) and
then unless trained to be perfectly still. It
will eat and shuffle and move on, which

[14th October 1948] makes the field in ones glass career all over the place. So I found I had to dismount. Nevertheless it does take you on a reconnaissance with comparative speed and comfort and Lassie and I ended friends.

We started going SW round the swamp. Besides those (15) seen the day before other swamp birds recorded was the WHITE IBIS. Many nests were seen in the Red Gums – a WHISTLING EAGLES and many of the platform variety herons. Birds in the surrounding country – MAGPIE RAVEN, SWALLOW, TREE-MARTIN, CORELLA, PALLID CUCKOO, STARLING, SPARROW, GOLDFINCH, NATIVE THRUSH, NOISY MINER, WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER, WILLIE-WAGTAIL and RED-BACKED PARROT. On the other side of the swamp is an area called the "Suckers." Actually it is a small paddock near the swamp which has not been grazed and as a result many gum saplings have made a close thicket. I spent some time

[14th October 1948] in here and was rewarded by finding MUSK LORIKEETS – hundreds of them and very beautiful they are too – KOOKABURRA SACRED KINGFISHER, EASTERN ROSELLA, BROWN TREE CREEPER, STRIATED PARDALOTE.

I then I rode over to a small, weed covered swamp but found only a family of MOUNTAIN DUCK. One half-grown young was near the centre of a paddock and being rigorously attacked by a Raven dodging and ducking for all it was worth as its tormentor's wings spread over it as "black as a tar barrel".

I then rode back the way I had come home for lunch and wrote in a bird, abundant, but which had nevertheless so far escaped my note book – the MAGPIE-LARK.

After lunch I went for a short walk up to the road and along it for a while, making my acquaintance with the birds of that country but seeing nothing new.

[14th October 1948] A period of quiet in the afternoon during which I wrote up the foregoing. Then at 4.30 I set out for the SW corner of the swamp. I added a BLACKFACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE to my list and also found the nest of a WHITE-NECKED HERON. Besides watching many birds carefully nothing particularly of note occurred before I returned at 6.0 pm, with Corellas wheeling in flocks of white against the black evening clouds and the Whistling Eagles soaring like specks under the clouds.

15th October 1948 Opened a beautiful calm day. In the night I had been lying awake to the call of the BOOBOOK

(65) OWL. A slight breeze came up after breakfast during which it was arranged that I go off to another part of the property by the border. So armed with lunch and a sketch map of where I was supposed to go I set off.

The track soon turned south and formed the boundary between Victoria and South Australia. Open forest on either side soon changed to scrub and unimproved land. The track lead through many water splashes, but the ground was firm and the car behaved like a

[15th October 1948] most successful amphibian. After four miles I stopped by some bracken for some coffee and had very soon JACKY WINTER, DUSKY WOODSWALLOW, STRIATED THORNBILL, EASTERN WHITEFACE, BLUEWREN, YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILL, BRONZEWING and YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATER added to my notes. I also find that there were WHITE COCKATOOS present, in fact mixing in flocks with the Corellas. CRIMSON ROSELLAS were also plentiful in the open forest in twos and threes; in fact they seem here to have much the same habitat as the Eastern Rosella.

I then drove (east) into the property and pulled up beside a rushy swamp which proved on inspection to be singularly unexciting so I moved on through a gate to the further paddock and after crossing much sodden ground pulled up by "Dodge Hole" - a large swamp with many trees and thick with reeds. A brief inspection seemed to show that it too was not exciting. A pair of Musk Duck were on it, the male in

[15th October 1948] sooty black silently and ominously
diving. DUSKY MOORHEN were swimming about
in the reeds and so this swamp had
the three common water birds (with Coot and
Eastern Swamphen). A short circuit into the
scrub found nothing of interest but a
LITTLE GREBE on a weed strewn pond.

After lunch I set off and did
a large circuit of the paddock embracing the
swamp and going through both open
forest and scrub. My first find was
a BLUE-FACED HONEYEATER – a beautiful bird
with which I was very pleased. Shortly after,
while skirting the scrub, five EMUS were seen
running swiftly over the heath away from
me. A few feathers I had previously seen
on the barbed wire which had prepared
me for their presence. They were smaller
than I had imagined.

Resting by the swamp (where at least
two Yellow-billed Spoonbill were nesting, and I
expect some Little Pied Cormorants) an EASTERN
SHRIKE-TIT appeared in a gum by me. I am

[15th October 1948] always a little bit surprised to see this bird – between occurrences I virtually forget its existence! White Cockatoos were making an awful din and I thought until I saw an AUSTRALIAN GOSHAWK, that I was the intruder! A swallow had built its nest on the hollow burnt-out inside of a trunk and it contained young.

I had so far met several Blue-tongued lizards (and later met several other pairs) and was not surprised, though totally unprepared when I nearly stood on a large tiger snake. A beautiful brown specimen with black banding. It lay quite still watching me with beady eye, I was surprised at its great girth, which with a total length of 2 ½ – 3 feet and abrupt tapering of the tail made it squat.

I then took the car down into the scrub and immediately I was writing new birds into my book – EASTERN SPINE-BILL, WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER, BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER and RED WATTLE-BIRD. A Yellow-tailed Thornbill was

[15th October 1948] taking food to its young in a nest almost
hidden in the dependent part of a gum and
a family of Magpies peered down at me
over the ledge of the nest.
I returned to the Boundary Lane
for tea. After I walked round a swamp
where Black-fronted Dotterels and Little Pied
Cormorants were the obvious inhabitants.
With the latter as they circled the dam was
a LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT – just a shade larger
than its companions. A RESTLESS FLYCATCHER
flew over the young saplings. By the car
in the bracken was a BLUE WREN feeding
young and a WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WREN
sung from a sprig of bracken.

16th October 1948 A fairly still westerly was blowing
(35) large white clouds across a blue sky, I
went out on the swamp in the morning in
a spitt – rather a "flattie". I visited several
trees and found six Little Pied Cormorants nests
in one – each with four eggs in it. There
were also seven Yellow-billed Spoonbills nests in
four trees, some nests had one or two eggs.

[16th October 1948] the others had either one or three young in them. The [?] nests were indescribably dirty as were the young themselves. One filthy nest was lined with young gum leaves and had a clean egg in it. It almost looks as if that was the first egg of a second brood.

Also I found a Swan's egg lying chipped on the horizontal trunk of a gum just above water. It contained a well advanced but dead young one in it and was surrounded by other chippings of Swans eggs. It made me wonder if those eggs had been taken there by a Whistling Eagle (virtually the only bird of prey hereabouts) and that trunk formed a meal table, rather like that of a Swamp Hawk.

I cruised round for a bit visiting trees and stumps but found nothing more of interest. The wind made the going hard as did water which came into the boat via many leaks, so I made for home for some mid-morning tea, after which believe it or not, I rested on my back

[16th October 1948] After lunch I set out on foot round the dam. Nothing new was seen in the saplings on the other side. In fact a strong wind was blowing which made observing very difficult. I went on to the dam beyond which is covered with water weed. I got a superb view of a pair of Little Grebes in full plumage – they are beautiful. Then on round the swamp home.

I have had a very lazy day but feel now extremely tired. I think yesterday was a bit strenuous. Still I have got about a lot in limited time and have a total of seventy birds seen in the district (seventy-one with the Choughs seen at Dergholm). It has been a wonderful few days and has made me less inclined and less inclined for work!

17th October 1948 We set off at 9.30 on our long trek home via Mount Gambia. We had had a marvellous holiday, short that it was and I was very much better. In the open forest between the Border and the Naracoorte – Mt. Gambia road I saw

[17th October 1948] a SWAMP-HARRIER, WHITE-FRONTED CHAT, and DIAMOND FIRETAIL. These three brought the total bird list of the locality up to seventy four birds, quite a fair list for the time. After Penola where we filled with petrol we travelled south through vast pine forests until we came out onto the settled land around Mt Gambia. It was raining and we had not much time so we pushed on to enter the extensive forest that extends from the border almost to Port Fairy – a dreary road. A SCARLET ROBIN and a pair of Pallid Cuckoos were seen. We had lunch at Heywood – not bad either and pushed on again after an hour.

It rained most of the time and with the windscreen wiper out of order driving was not much fun. At Tyrendarra was a pair of Corellas and a BROWN HAWK. On a swamp at Port Fairy were Little Pied Cormorants and that ended any observation of birds of any interest at all. Through

[17th October 1948] rain past the familiar dairy country of
Warrnambool to the far more dignified
and pleasant grazing country of Camperdown,
the Stony Rises and home just 260 miles.
The total list for the holiday was
seventy-nine species. I hope I shall
be able to go up there again with
more time (and strength) so that more
use can be made of the camera.
[photo]
Semi-improved open forest.

[17th October 1948] [photo]

Scrub – "Emu Country"

[photo]

"Dodge Hole" – Swamp

[17th October 1948] [photo]

"Dodge hole

[photo]

Swamp before Derril homestead

[17th October 1948] [photo]

Swamp and improved open forest

[photo]

Swamp and red-gums, Derril

5.11.48 (13) I got a call in the afternoon out half way to Ball's Dam. When that was over I of course went on the whole way. And had a feast of birds. It has recently been very wet and the dam was full and covered with wild fowl.

What one expects to see – EASTERN SWAMPHEN, COOT, LITTLE PIED CORMORANT, LITTLE BLACK CORMORANT SWANS, HOARY-HEADED GREBE, SPUR-WINGED PLOVER and SILVER GULL. There were several pairs of BLACK DUCK and a single male MUSK DUCK was seen.

Langkoop was brought vividly to memory when a MANED GOOSE was seen on the other side of the dam feeding on the grass a few feet from the water. But there were very many other duck on the dam – their white under tail – coverts, white eye and tip of bill proclaimed them as HARDHEAD. They were present in astounding numbers for such a comparatively rare and elusive bird. When they rose out of

[5.11.48] the water to stretch their wings their white abdomens were seen. This with their general build and diving reminded me immediately of the Tufted Duck on the Round Pond.

As I was watching these I heard in the water nearby the pattering and splash of ducks alighting. I looked down and there, a mere few yards away, was a pair of BLUE-BILLED DUCK. They reminded me, in build, of the Scaup – flat and wide but the black head, chestnut back and pale blue bill of the male were very much more handsome. The female was a very sober freckled lady. They appeared not in the least shy as I sat in the car a little way away. A very rare "New-bird"!

6.11.48 (22) The next day was wet too. The three of us had spent a very muddy hour at the Colac Show and came out again to Ball's Dam where we had

[6.11.48] a cup of tea overlooking the water. All
birds seen the previous day were also
seen including the pair of Blue-billed
Duck. In addition three were a
few flocks of MOUNTAIN DUCK and, this
time, there alighted on the water
below was a pair of BLUE-WINGED
SHOVELLER! The blue wing is very
distinctive in flight – when at rest it
can be identified by the shape of the
head + the fact it is not a Pink-eared
Duck which is most outstanding! So
the dam today carried seven species
of duck!

I then went for a walk down
to the bridge where there were many
SWALLOWS and where the RED WARBLERS
were singing loudly and scratching on
either side. In the Willows which
border that side of the swamp was
a WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER – another reminder
of LANGKOOP! Quietly in amongst
the reeds were the DUSKY MOORHEN

[6.11.48] It is a quiet and retiring bird and
though I feel certain that it is never
absent from the swamp, there are
many occasions that I do not see it.
A pair of MARSH TERN flew over, flying
erratically, and a single WHITE-FRONTED
HERON flew off from a post.
I climbed a pine so that
I could survey the rear swamp from
a height. From there the reeds did
not look nearly so thick and so
nests were seen. An awful racket to my
left drew attention to a family of MAGPIES
being fed in their nest in a nearby pine.
A misty rain started as I turned home
while a flock of fifteen Little Black
Cormorants tumbled 500' [feet] down out
of the sky to alight on the sodden
banks.

13th November 1948 Though it was not my
(12) Saturday afternoon off I promised
Ralph Williams that I would go down
to the "Point" when he phoned me

[13th November 1948] that he had White-faced Herons nesting
and that a pair of Boobook Owls
were about the place. While I was
waiting for them to come out I looked
about and saw MAGPIES, MAGPIE-LARKS,
RED-WATTLE-BIRDS, WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATERS,
STARLINGS, GOLDFINCHES, SPARROWS, and BLACKBIRDS.
But I was very surprised to see the
flash of a rufous tail and spot a
WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WREN in the fronds of
a palm – an odd plant in a locality
far removed from the bush. Actually
the garden at the Point is overgrown
with shrubs – with many trees
including flowering gums and very
many pines.

It was to the latter that
Ralph took me to show me an old
WHITE-FACED HERON'S nest. He said the
brood was gone and the pair were
building again but we could not
find where. A WILLIE-WAGTAIL was
also in the thick pines.

[18th November 1948] We then searched for the Boobooks
and eventually a shout from Mrs
Williams led us to a bird sitting on
a twig jutting out from a clean thin
trunk of a gum. I looked and
admired it as well as confirming
their identification. A little later a
doubt crept into my mind and when
looked at critically of course the bird
was a TAWNY FROGMOUTH! Such is the
power of suggestion. At close approach
it looked round but made no
attempt at "freezing" bough-like.
It was a very profitable
~~2]~~ half-hour – how I envy them
their garden!

19.11.48 After my Friday morning at the
(37) Melbourne hospital Joan, Michael and I
(3 days) drove down to stay at Moelfre Merricks North.
The trip through ti-tree and tight scrub was
familiar and brought back memories of
staying in that part as a child. Nothing
exciting was seen other than a BLACK-FACED [CUCKOO-SHRIKE]

[19.11.48] CUCKOO-SHRIKE, a DUSKY WOODSWALLOW a SCARLET ROBIN and a JAVA DOVE. On arrival I had a quick refresher and found I remembered quite a bit.

20.11.48 I explored a little more going into the orchards and into the little piece of manna-gum bush opposite the house. NATIVE THRUSHES were everywhere in full song, WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WRENS and BLUE WRENS could be heard. The common honeyeater was the YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER which was everywhere, while in the garden, hanging onto the flowers were a pair of EASTERN [SPINEBILLS]

[photo]

Sun + cloud : 18 inches : f64 : 1/5 sec.

[20.11.48] SPINEBILL. Around the house and buildings were BLACKBIRDS, GOLDFINCHES, GREENFINCHES and SPARROWS while only a little further afield were many STARLINGS. Heard from the house were PALLID CUCKOOS, and only a little further away in bush was the trill of a FAN-TAILED CUCKOO, GREY FANTAILS and MAGPIES were in the pines bordering the orchard from where a COMMON BRONZEWING flapped hastily. Later in the morning Joan and I walked down through the orchards where there were WILLIE-WAGTAILS RED WATTLE-BIRDS and INDIAN MYNAHS. In the ti-tree scrub in the lower gully we were disappointed to find only a pair of WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER.

In the afternoon we went to tea [photo] to a Mr Slaters home which was below Moelfre on the coast – beautifully made and situated with the very best made of the garden.

[20.11.48]. [photo]
In the low lying
country below Merricks
were WHITE-FRONTED
HERONS, SWALLOWS
SKYLARKS and a
NANKEEN KESTREL. In
the bushes in their
garden was a LITTLE
WATTLE-BIRD – a species I have not met for a
very long time. Below their house, on the
shore were very few SILVER GULLS.
When we returned I had a
close look round for any photographable nests.
The twittering of young in a lambertiana by
the house called my attention to a BROWN
THORNBILL'S nest. I climbed to it – 25-30' [feet]
but it was not suitable for the camera.
I then went down into the shrubbery and
snooped hopefully. After a while there was
a flutter from a rhododendron and there,
3 feet from the ground a YELLOW ROBIN'S
nest was just asking to be photographed. Its

[20.11.48]. site is indicated by the two photos taken
of the bush with camera set up. So marking
its site for next morning. I moved on to a
piece of bush over the road.
There there were SILVEREYES, BLACK-
[photo] FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKES, WHITE-THROATED
TREE-CREEPERS and a very
growling, chuckling KOOKABURRA
which soon indicated to
me its nest in a hole in
tall dead trunk which
can be seen in the
accompanying photograph.
Though I waited for a
full half-hour for that bird
to return to photograph it
as well as its hole. It had more patience than
I had and I gave up. A shadow
beside me on the ground made me
look up to see a GREY FANTAIL building a
nest 20 feet up in a~~n old~~ young sapling. Both
birds were engaged, sitting on it and rotating
with the bill working along the outside.

21/11/48. The next morning I was up at 6.30 am and off to the shrubbery with all the equipment. This was the first

[photo]

Sun + cloud: 18 inches : F16 : 1/25 second.

nest I had tackled by myself with the new lenses. After a bit of "gardening" with black cotton I got a satisfactory angle but on the 45' of rubber tubing with the large bulb and waited.

The bird soon came back but was off in a flash when the shutter clicked so that two or three of the

[1948-11-21] first photographs showed the ghost track
of a bird going off the nest. They
seemed at first to get more wary of
the camera and stayed off for periods
of up to half-an-hour. However the two
eggs in the nest eventually lured the
birds back and as they stayed while
the shutter clicked a total of 18 shots
of nest and nest and bird were
obtained. All were taken at a distance
of 18 inches but the aperture and exposure
were varied and varying instructive
results were obtained. Focus was an
inch or two proximal to the estimated
focus; bright sunlight in a bush such
as a rhododendron gives far too strong
dappling; and a twig comes rather
too close into the picture for the camera
should have been further round to the
right. Those are the things I wanted
to find out as well as the fact that
the lens are a very good investment indeed.
While waiting for the birds to come

[21.11.48] to the nest, the activities of a pair of
NATIVE THRUSHES attracted my attention to a
nest 15' [feet] in an evergreen. I climbed
to it to find young in it.
My notes for the trip home
that afternoon list only NOISY MINERS
WHITE-THROATED TREE-CREEPER, TREE-MARTINS and
MAGPIE-LARKS. These notes record only
the bush wanderings and birds met with,
and take no account of the social
doings and enjoyment of a week-end.
This weekend, on all counts was
first rate!

4.12.48. Joan and I, again with Michael, went
off for the week-end, this time to Turkeith.

(39) On the way at the Bleak House creek were
(two days) a WHITE-NECKED HERON and a STRAW-NECKED
IBIS but nothing of interest was
noticed on the short trip out there. Their
garden again was an oasis for birds –
a veritable Heligoland of the plains and
the birds seen in it were BLACKBIRDS
GOLDFINCHES (two nest with young in creepers

[4.12.48] around the verandah, RESTLESS FLYCATCHER, WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATER, SWALLOWS (a pair were exploring the sitting-room for a nesting site!) RED WATTLE-BIRD and PALLID CUCKOO.

I very soon changed and went off and first visited the plantation where Mr Neil [guess] Ramsay had shown me the SNIPE (29.9.47) and they were still there though in much fewer numbers. There was a SILVER GULL on the nearby dam – that's all. But on the Plains were MAGPIES, RAVENS, MAGPIE-LARKS, STARLING, WILLIE-WAGTAILS, SKYLARKS, PIPITS, a BROWN HAWK and many YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS. I then moved across to the large dam where I had last been on that blazing hot day (25.1.48) A ploughed field by which I passed was covered with SPUR-WINGED PLOVER, reminding me strongly of a certain ploughed field near Stonebridge which "hid" hundreds of Lapwings.

First sight of the dam showed little but a WHITE-FACED HERON but on

[4.12.48] careful scrutiny duck were seen which
restricted themselves into five species – ~~[?]~~
BLACK DUCK, HARDHEAD, GR TEAL, MOUNTAIN DUCK
and a pair of WOOD DUCK – not bad!
It's odd how I am meeting with the
latter with comparative frequency after
my introduction at Langkoop. The same may
be said for the Teal but that is simply
because I am now recognising it.

There flew up from the road
by a plantation a pair of small
bright yellow green parrots. They were
like an ~~adult~~ male Red-backed Parrot
without the red rump, they were too
bright green for a Blue-winged Parrot
and I thought too large for Budgerigah.
I foolishly did not stop the car in time
to see them so the identity which can't
be proved remains amongst the above
three species.

5.12.48. Next morning I paid another
visit to the Nangana swamp where I
had been same 2½ months ago – 25/9/48

[5.12.48] On the way in the car I passed close to a flock of BANDED PLOVER. Over the swamp as I approached flew a SWAMP HARRIER. I walked out to the now abandoned BROLGA'S nest (a much drier trip than previously) which looked forlorn and untidy. I wandered round and listened that SANDPIPER (sp?), FAIRY MARTIN, STRIATED FIELD-WREN and WHITE-FRONTED CHAT. A quail got up at every feet and appeared to be a STUBBLE QUAIL. From where it rose was a grass-lined nest contain four stone-coloured eggs finely speckled with olive-brown to give a pepper + salt appearance, with no zoning [guess]. This does not fit the description of the Stubble Quail (partic. in numbers) and it may be the Brown or Swamp Quail. The two last birds noted round the homestead were the BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE and a GOSHAWK.

Not much was done in the way of birds, for the weather was windy,

[5.12.48] with a few showers. Also a large amount of the time was spent socially (and pleasantly) but no ornithologically.

4.12.48 (30) An elderly man who has only a precarious hold on life required a visit to Johanna River bless him! So with Joan and Michael we set off on a beautifully fine day through Gellibrand, Ferguson, Lavers Hill and the Ocean Rd to Johanna.

It was really a very poor bird day. By the time we had got to Laver's Hill the following were in the note-book - BLACKBIRD GOLDFINCH SPARROW STARLING, MAGPIE MAGPIE-LARK KOOKABURRA GREY THRUSH,, YELLOW ROBIN BLUE WREN SCARLET ROBIN GREY FANTAIL. The Johanna Rd was most disappointing, going steeply down a spur with cleared land ("dead land") on all sides and no bush. A KESTREL hovered over the steep sides.

After I had seen the man we went in the car as close to the

[4.12.48] ~~bush~~ sea as we could and then with
rugs walked through the dunes to the sand.
There in the hot sun and in no wind
we had a restful lunch watching a very
blue sea beat itself on and swirl
round angry rocks. Not a bird was
to be seen. It was only later, when
I took Michael ~~e~~ to see the sea at closer
quarters (and he was very doubtful about it)
did a HOODED DOTTEREL run far in front
of me up the beach.

After lunch we drove through
paddocks, east, and parallel to the sea.
PIPITS were in the grass and STUBBLE QUAIL
jumped clear of the car, not flying
until I got out of it. SWALLOWS, a
WHITE-FRONTED CHAT and CRIMSON ROSELLAS
completed our list for the flats before we
got out onto a track which led on to
a far more gentle gradient up to the
Ocean Rd.

On the Charlie's Creek Rd we
stopped for a cup of tea, and heard about

[4.12.48] us WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WREN, BRISTLE-BIRDS
PARDALOTES, a few gratings of a GANG-GANG
and a YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATER.
At Kawarren a pair of BLUE-WINGED
PARROTS flew up off the road. I got out
to make identification sure – no orange
on the abdomen. In that brief stop
there were also added to the list DUSKY
WOOD SWALLOWS, a pair of RESTLESS FLYCATCHERS,
WHITE-EARED and YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATERS
and a MOUNTAIN THRUSH. Though
nothing of real interest was seen, it
was an excellent mid-week outing.

18.1.49 More than a month from this date I am
(20) writing this, showing that I have been not
a little remiss in the writing up of my notes.
This day I had a call out to Cororooke and
took the opportunity on the return journey
of going by Bullock Swamp (SPUR-WINGED
PLOVER on the mud in the centre only) and
Balintore and Cororooke swamps. These were
teeming with birds, the main interest
being in a patch of flooded ground by the

[18.1.49] Lake at Cororooke. On the open swamps and on the Lake were many SWANS, MOUNTAIN DUCK, GREY TEAL and a few BLACK DUCK. Also were PINK-EARED DUCK, MUSK DUCK and I think I caught sight of a BLUE-WINGED SHOVELLOR, HOARY-HEADED and CRESTED GREBES, COOT and EASTERN SWAMPHEN were afloat while GULLS and WHISKERED TERNS were over the water. On the edges were considerable flocks of SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER and many WHITE-HEADED STILTS.

On the flooded paddocks were simply hundreds of WHITE-FACED HERONS in which were many immature. Two YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILLS were accompanied by one ROYAL SPOONBILL – a welcome rarity. Accompanied these was a small EGRET which had ~~a~~ warm buff back and throat – in fact a "paddy-bird." I am writing in to the Emu [guess] about this latter which has completely mystified me.

20.1.49 One afternoon, after surgery, I slipped

(17) out to Ball's Dam. It was a hot day

[20.1.49] with very little breeze, but the birds were far more invigorating than to be working in the coolness of our rooms.

I stopped the car at the pines on the top of the hill before descending to the bridge. Then I walked obliquely down the hill to the right so that I came to the lower reedy dam from below. The Landrails which I had hoped to see weren't there but I was well rewarded by the sight of a pair of BLUE-BILLED DUCK with 3 young – the first record of breeding in the district. Perched in a willow, looking down on the reeds I watched the family for some time and noted the males display to the female. This also is going in to the Emu. EASTERN SWAMP HENS were also on this part of the dam and I eventually moved along, across the road to survey the larger dam, over which reeds had grown up extensively and now covered more than half the

[20.1.49] area in conjunction with water reeds
growing in from the edges. On the dam
was a solitary MANED GOOSE, a few BLACK
DUCK and GREY TEAL, hundreds of SWANS,
DUSKY MOORHEN and COOT. I saw also in
the distance another pair of BLUE-BILLED DUCK!
There were more than a hundred HOARY-
HEADED GREBES and about a hundred
LITTLE GREBES, the latter keeping in
amongst the water weeds, while the
former preferred the open water. Around
the edges were SPURRED-WINGED PLOVER, WHITE-FACED
HERON and a WHITE-NECKED HERON; on the
posts were a few LITTLE PIED CORMORANTS
There were at least six GULL-BILLED TERNS –
the largest number so far seen at one
time in the district. In the reeds were
many silent REED-WARBLERS, while over
the whole swamped dipped hundreds
of SWALLOWS. This was a most rewarding
mid-week outing.

29.1.49 Exactly a week later I made another
(15) short visit to Ball's Dam but had not

[29.1.49] quite such a good day. Birds present
which were not there the previous week
were the MOUNTAIN DUCK, MARSH TERN, SHORT-
TAILED SANDPIPER and at least a pair
of SWAMP-HARRIERS, one of which was watched
as it dived and harried a Mountain
Duck and then a party of grebes, Birds
consistently visited one patch of reeds where
there must either have been a nest or
a feeding platform.

12.2.49 The previous evening (11th), after surgery,
(40) Joan, Michael and I went down to
Glen Aire. We were to stay with Mrs.
Winifred Denny, who for a long time had
been interested in the birds of that
district, having spent her girlhood there.
Our spirits were not very high (Joan
finds it difficult to take the Charley's Crk
Rd) and it was pouring with rain.

But this day dawned clear with
a stiff south westerly breeze. Later it
clouded over somewhat so that we
had alternate sun and light showers.

[2.2.49] After breakfast we went off over the sand-dunes to the coast – very rugged with spray shooting up the cliffs. It was a very fine sight, particularly when a PEREGRINE FALCON dived like a bullet down wind above the cliffs. The stunted wind-blown bushes at the cliff top harboured many SINGING HONEYEATERS and SILVEREYES while in one bush I found a WRENS nest with young. To sea was a single AUSTRALIAN GANNET.

On the Glen Aire flats were GOLDFINCHES; SPARROWS, STARLINGS, SWALLOWS, MAGPIES, MAGPIE-LARKS and BROWN HAWK. With picnic lunch we set off, past Horden Vale into thick timber where we immediately came across many BLUE-WINGED PARROTS and CRIMSON ROSELLAS. Then a trill – a female SATIN BOWER-BIRD dropped down into the gully from the bank above the road – only a flash but quite enough to identify it.

We turned right down the Cap

[2.2.49] [Cape] Otway road on which we first went
through thick bush, then a stretch of heathland
with banksia and then into a curious
"close open ferns" which reminded me a
bit of rolling parkland. We turned onto
the Blanket Bay Rd and pulled ~~d~~ up when
we reached the Parker R. where we
boiled the billy and had our lunch.
Mrs Denny and I then went for a
walk up the river and returned by
going up and back along the ridge.
Birds seen were STRIATED THORNBILLS,
GREY FANTAILS, a RUFOUS FANTAIL, a FAN-TAILED
CUCKOO, RED-TIPPED PARDALOTE, KOOKABURRA, RUFOUS
BRISTLE-BIRD, GREY-THRUSH, BEAUTIFUL FANTAIL,
RED-BROWED FINCH, OLIVE WHISTLER, YELLOW-FACED
HONEYEATER, WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATER, WHITE-
BROWED SCRUB-WREN, DUSKY WOODSWALLOW, JACKY
WINTER (oddly out of place) and the ubiquitous
BLACK BIRD. It was a most rewarding
spot which we left to continue down
the road to the light house.
The road emerges from the

[2.2.49] open forest into sand-dunes and it
was there that I caught a glimpse
of a TAWNY-CROWNED HONEYEATER. There
were no birds except sparrows in the
vicinity of the light house and we
moved back to the bush. Mrs Denny
and I walked through the stretch of
heath and came across a BRONZE-WINGED
PIGEON, heard CRESCENT HONEYEATERS, RAVENS
and a silent pair of WHITE-EARED
HONEYEATERS. Continuing after tea we left
the cars at the top of that gorgeous gully
full of blackwoods and walked ahead
down the road. There were BROWN
THORNBILLS, YELLOW-WINGED HONEY EATERS, TREE-
MARTINS and a pair of KING PARROTS
feeding well grown young high up on
tall gum.

13.2.49 This day we went by car round
(45) to Horden Vale and on the lagoons
were hundreds of SWANS, a few LITTLE
(62) PIED CORMORANTS and WHITE-FRONTED HERONS. We
lunched among the ti-tree near the

[13.2.49] mouth of the Aire R. and we were immediately struck by the curious calls of the LITTLE WATTLE-BIRD. We went for a walk after lunch up in the heath on the dunes and saw a BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE, SPOTTED PARDALOTE and WHITE-THROATED TREE CREEPER. We were considerably surprised to see SNIPE rise up from the dunes, and though not surprised, thrilled to see a BRUSH BRONZEWING.

We then crossed the river and walked by the river and reeds in the direction of Glen Aire. PIPITS rose from the grass and WHITE-FRONTED CHATS moved ahead of us in small parties. LITTLE GREBE, COOT, DUSKY MOORHEN, MUSK DUCK and EASTERN SWAMP HEN were on the river. Over the reed-beds flew a SWAMP HARRIER. Though tedious this part of the day did not reward us with anything of interest. On the way back we added SCARLET ROBIN and GREY CURRAWONG to the list

[13.2.49] We left Glen Aire after an evening
meal having had a first-rate weekend.
I had always wanted to explore that
part of the district and had ample
opportunity then to do so. On Burton's
Look-out, on our return, a BOOBOOK
OWL sat on the road in our lights
making itself the last bird calling for the
bird note-book.

2.3.49 The previous day I heard of a flock
(11) of 100-150 CAPE BARREN GEESE in the Lismore
District. So I went to the fellow who had
seen them – John Howard a rabbit-buyer and
got directions. They appeared simple so that
at 3.30 am I got up (Joan + Michael being
at Merricks) and sallied forth at 4.0. It was
of course dark and at the Stony Rises
whisps *[wisps] of fog commenced which gradually
increased in intensity. After Camperdown
I could not find my turning so returned
and spent half-an-hour trying to find
a living soul. Eventually I was off
on the Derrinallum road and finding

[2.3.49] no land mark arrived at Derrinallum at 5.30
as dawn broke!
So I came back slowly, through the
the thick mist peering for my land marks.
Birds seen were a STRAW-NECKED IBIS, MAGPIES
in thousands, WILLIE-WAGTAILS, GOLDFINCHES, SWALLOW,
a SCARLET ROBIN, BROWN HAWKS and a SWAMP
HARRIER. I stopped at a swamp by
the road and besides many pairs of SPUR-
WINGED PLOVER there were two adult NATIVE
COMPANIONS with one young. They stalked
away as I followed them and eventually
took flight. A large lake, just beyond the
swamp was birdless.
Flying along the sugar-gum plantations
by the road were many LORIKEETS – by
their comparatively soft screech I think they
were probably Purple-crowned. So I then
set off for home in a journey through
continuous fog, arriving at 7.40, and
being a bit weak for the rest of the
day.
3.3.49 Later that evening I rang up my
(14)

[3.3.49] guide and spent a long time going over
the route in detail. So in the morning
I rose before 4.0 and set off at 4.30 –
this time with no searching of Camperdown.
But about 5 miles out on the Lismore
road I got a puncture, taking quarter of
an hour in fog and darkness to change
the wheel.

But I arrived at the appointed
spot just as it was getting light enough
to see at 5.40. A lake stretched into
the mist on the right from the bridge
from which the calls of duck could
be heard. So after a cup of coffee
I set off with high hopes. BLACK DUCK,
TEAK, BLUE-WINGED SHOVELLER were there but
no geese. WHITE-FRONTED CHATS, RED-CAPPED
DOTTEREL, SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS, WHITE-~~NECK~~ FACED
HERONS, GULLS and SWANS lined the
edge of the lake. I stalked the
duck and got about 15 yards from
them – a distance which would have
pleased a shooter if it had not bee

[3.3.49] a sanctuary.

I walked by the lake for about a mile and came upon some WOOD DUCK, MOUNTAIN DUCK, a large mixed flock of LITTLE and HOARY-HEADED GREBES and four YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILLS – but no geese. It was now later and I hurried back to the car, and returned, passing that elusive "Endfield" post-box as I reached the Derrinallum road and got back, again through fog at 7.50. The stalking had made my biceps femoris extremely stiff and I was even more good for nothing than I had been on the previous day.

12.3.49. (68) Returning from Melbourne on Friday I went to the school for the week-end. On Saturday a party was arranged under Mr. Ponder. The hire of a car I think swelled our numbers so that with three in the front and six in the back the car slowly crept off, much like a low-slung beetle.

It was a beautiful day – a clear sky, no wind and not more than

[12.3.49] very warm. Our first call was at Lara
Lake where we were informed that many
of the duck had left. The lake itself
was double its size owing to the recent
extremely heavy rains. On the edge we
first met WHITE-FACED HERONS, SPUR-WINGED
PLOVER, BLACK-FRONTED DOTTEREL and SWANS.
At first sight there were not many duck,
picking up BLACK DUCK and GREY TEAL.
A solitary MUSK DUCK and a few BLUE-
WINGED SHOVELLER were soon picked up as
we walked towards the further end and
there we saw MOUNTAIN DUCK, many LITTLE
PIED CORMORANTS and a STRAW-NECKED IBIS.
When we were nearly round, when we
had the sun behind us we picked up
several CHESTNUT TEAL, two PINK-EARED DUCK,
a small flock of MANED GEESE and three
BLUE-BILLED DUCK – a total of nine species
which was not too bad. Also afloat were
many COOT and HOARY-HEADED GREBES.
Around the Lake on the paddocks
and in the sugar-gum plantations were

[12.3.49] MAGPIE-LARKS, MAGPIES, RAVENS, RED-BACKED PARROTS,
(strangely common there and at the You Yangs)
EASTERN ROSELLAS, YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS, WILLIE-WAGTAILS,
NOISY MINERS, PIPITS and of course SPARROWS and
STARLINGS.

All piling into the car we set off
for the You Yangs. Before reaching them we
turned left and entered Wooloomanata
property. There we drove through the very
"open" open forest and passed a LITTLE
GREBE sitting placidly on a small weed-covered
dam. Passing the homestead a flock of
WHITE COCKATOOS flew up from the garden, as
a WHISTLING EAGLE flew overhead being
pursued in turn by Magpies and Ravens.
We cooked our lunch (steak) over a fire and
boiled a billy of incredibly muddy water
which made a soapy tea! The sun
was warm on a bare back and it
was really great to be back by Lascelles
Dam.

We set off on a circuit of the dam
and picked up WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATERS, RE

[12.3.49] WATTLE-BIRDS, BROWN TREE-CREEPERS, LITTLE (?) LORIKEETS
KOOKABURRAS in the red-gums along the banks.
Also there were SWALLOWS and FAIRY MARTINS.
On the dam there was nothing more than a
pair of Black Duck, Little Pied Cormorants and
Black-fronted Dotterels on the fringes. On the
further side on a small stretch of the
bank little more than 200 yards in length
was a flock of GREY-CROWNED BABBLERS
where they had been known to frequent
for the past ten years.

We then set off into what is
known as the "wood," a patch of saplings
and scrub which has become known
to the school ornithologist ~~(which has be)~~ as
one of those rare localities where many
species can always be found within
a small area. This time it did not
let us down. A list of those I added
to my note-book in that hour are -
GREY FANTAIL, STRIATED PARDALOTE, SPECKLED WARBLER,
DUSKY WOOD-SWALLOW, RAINBOW-BIRDS (many of them
sitting on prominent boughs shaking the wing

[12.3.49] off butterflies) NEW HOLLAND HONEYEATERS, a BLACK-FACED CUCKOO SHRIKE, RED-BROWED FINCH
BRONZE-WINGED PIGEONS, GREY THRUSH, SPINY-CHEEKED HONEYEATER.
Returning to the camp we came across a beautiful
flock of DIAMOND FIRETAILS.
Into the car again and the body
came down many times onto the springs with
a sickening thud as we went across back
roads to Anakie. On the plains were BROWN
HAWKS, KESTRELS, WHITE-FRONTED CHATS and ~~KESTRELS~~ GOLDFINCHES
When we arrived we nearly bogged, so left
the car on the main road and walked
into the gorge. And there, at the entrance
is another of those rare localities teeming
with bird life, as Joan and I found
when we went there in September (?) 1947.
Immediately we got there, we
found CRIMSON ROSELLAS, WHITE-THROATED TREE-CREEPERS,
SCARLET ROBIN, WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATERS, WRENS, YELLOW-
FACED HONEYEATERS, BROWN THORNBILLS and a
SATIN FLYCATCHER. A walk up the gorge
produced a GREY CURRAWONG, SILVER-EYES, WHITE-
EARED HONEYEATERS, BLACKBIRDS and a GOLDEN
WHISTLER. We also had a fine view of

[12.3.49] a wallaby bounding up the precipitous
sides of the gorge.
And so home after one of the
most successful bird days I have known.

10.4.49. Joan, Michael + I set out in the morning for
(23) Aireys Inlet via Lorne. It was a cold grey
day with occasional misty rain. The first
note of interest was a SCARLET ROBIN at Dean's
Marsh – about a mile north of the bush. I
have seen very few this year but they are
no doubt abundant now on the plains.
In the bush we saw the "regulars" –
KOOKABURRA, YELLOW ROBIN, CRIMSON ROSELLA, NATIVE
THRUSH and BLUE-WREN. A WHITETHROATED
TREE-CREEPER flew off the metal road into the
bush. The Ocean Road, as usual, was where
we heard a RUFOUS BRISTLE-BIRD.
When we arrived I immediately went
for a tour of the "lagoon" but there was very
little of interest on it – a few BLACK DUCK,
LITTLE GREBE, a solitary HOARY-HEADED GREBE, COOT and
DUSKY MOOREHEN – both with immatures without coloured
frontal plates and a pair of EASTERN SWAMPHEN.

[10.4.49] All those birds, owing to the tameness of the
many domestic duck. On the water, were
less timid than they usually are and
with the glasses, excellent views of the
details of their plumage were obtained as
well as the COOT diving for waterweed and
the DUSKY MOORHEN ~~[?]~~ eating blades of grass.
In the nearby pines were the (same) noisy
flock of YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATERS.

In the afternoon we went to the mouth
of the river (on which were a pair of SWANS, a
few LITTLE PIED CORMORANTS and a solitary GULL) where
I went for a walk into the sand hills. There
were BLUE WRENS, WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WRENS, SILVEREYE
and BROWN THORNBILLS. A WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER
appeared at dusk in the garden when the
lagoon was covered with darting SWALLOWS.

A very ordinary day – very different
from that at Aireys at the beginning of
April last year which was almost a record.
But the weather was quite different and I
did not go far in search of birds other
than in the most desultory manner

20.4.49. REVIEW OF THE 1948 – 1949 SEASON.

On the whole it has been a wet season and a good season for birds. Summer saw large quantities of duck on all the areas of water which were abundant and full – the Hardhead can be mentioned in particular. The main item of interest was the breeding of the Blue-billed Duck, a unique event as far as I can gather. The large areas of water have attracted large numbers of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, White-headed Stilts and Whiskered Terns, while such birds as the Gull-billed Terns, Spoonbills and Egrets have been more than normally in evidence. Quail were particularly numerous until the very heavy March rains since when the shooters have complained of their scarcity.

There has been a good flowering of the gums this year which has attracted many flocks of Lorikeets,

[20.4.49] which I have so far identified as
Purple-crowned only. Other may have
been present too. Budgerigars turned
up too and though I have seen only
few Blue-winged Parrots, it is more
than probable that this is because I
have not been out so much.

On the other hand I think
that insect-eaters have been less
common – particularly the Black-faced
Cuckoo-shrike and the Dusky-Wood-swallows.
Even the swallows are not as
numerous as usual.

As far as I myself am
concerned the year has lacked the
great opportunity offered by immunisation
trips – only two days in the Colac
Shire. Photographing the Brolga's nest,
the Gull rookery, the trip to Langkoop
and the day spent at the school
are the high spots of the year. Apart
from these I have mainly
concentrated on the swamps and plains

[20.4.49] which has reaped dividends in experience of these birds. But I have neglected the bush – only really seen at Glen Aire – and have left with me at the end of the season a feeling of dissatisfaction and I must so plan next season that I see the district more in proportion.

May 28-29th (33) At about 3.30am a Saturday afternoon I set off for Apollo Bay via Lorne. It was a pleasant sunny afternoon though cold and the outlook for a trip with the fishermen next morning looked bright.

At Dean's Marsh ~~an~~ STRAW-NECKED IBIS stood lonely in a swamp near which were feeding pairs of MOUNTAIN DUCKS. The only interest before Lorne was a SPOTTED QUAIL-THRUSH which hurried off the road as the car came round the corner. Below the Pacific Hotel were two immature PACIFIC GULLS.

[May 28-29th]. Near Wye River a solitary WHITE-FACED HERON stood in the rock pools on the shore which reminded me of the Queensland birds. At Kennet River I went up a wood cutter track which rose steeply to 700 or so feet above the small settlement. It was virgin bush at the end of the road, and, being high up the side of the ridge it was notable how little undergrowth there was – a very marked difference to the gullies which were thick with tree – ferns. It was getting dark and apart from a few anxious moments turning on a very treacherous surface the return to the Ocean Road was made uneventfully and with the birds intent and hidden in the dusk.

I got up at 6.30 am. next morning at the A.B.C. where Mrs Baulch had looked after me very well. After a breakfast of poached eggs I went forth and found several of the fishermen gathered together

[May 28-29th] all most reluctant to go out – they said the weather was bad and their boats which were on the pier were unavailable until others belonging to absent fishermen had been put in the water. I had made arrangements to with Doug Skene to go out with his step-father Tom Berry. However the latter was one whose boat was unavailable so I went the George Harrison and Frank (?).

Gulls were on the beach in numbers and a few followed us out to the fishing grounds where there were quite large flocks on the water, which rose and fed on refuse thrown from the boat. Our first excitement was a LITTLE PENGUIN which we nearly ran down but dived in front of the boat and disappeared. Then the albatrosses were about us, at first in small numbers which increased during the morning until there were

[May 28-29th] literally hundreds. The first were BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSSES and I assumed that the majority would be. However at least 2/3 were the SHY-ALBATROSS whose white cap and pale bill was distinctly seen. Later in the morning a young WANDERING ALBATROSS joined the others, with not much more than the centre of its back white.

Harrison suddenly called out "What's that – I have never seen one before?" It was a SKUA and I was evidently very lucky to see it. A single CRESTED TERN followed the ship piping its single note. A dark bird feeding among the gulls turned out to be SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER, which very soon flew off and disappeared. Very few GANNETS were seen – a pair on the water and a few diving in the distance. That was the sum of the sea-birds seen before we got back at 10:30 am. Nine all told

[May 28-29th]. four of which were only single
specimens and which added four
more to the local list. Apart from
this however I learnt a lot in
conversation with the fishermen who
apparently also see SOOTY ALBATROSSES,
PRIONS and DIVING-PETRELS. A very
successful outing even if we did just
get home before the nausea beat me.

I set off before lunch and
twisted up the Wild Dog Road. GOLDFINCHES
and SCARLET ROBINS were in the cleared
parts: GREY CURRAWONGS and CRIMSON ROSELLAS
in the thicker parts. At Barramunga I
turned down to Upper Gellibrand and
found it to be a deep valley, cleaned
and farmed. I had lunch at
a turnoff on the road up again.
In the bush there were YELLOW ROBINS
GREY THRUSHES, BROWN THORNBILLS, WRENS, WHITE-
EARED HONEYEATERS and I heard the
TREE-CREEPER. BRISTLE-BIRDS were heard
in the gullies, and far below, in the

[May 28-29th] cleared paddocks were MAGPIES
That was all in the bush (except
for BLACK-BIRDS and RED-BROWED FINCHES on
Mt [Mount] Sabine) and at Ball's Dam I
stopped for a cup of coffee. SWANS, EASTERN
SWAMPHENS, LITTLE + HOARY-HEADED GREBES
and hundreds of SWALLOWS – no duck,
no gulls.

7.7.49 The previous evening – during a week
spent in Melbourne – I had spent with
C.E.Bryant. Also present was a young
enthusiast Bruce Amos who has a very good
knowledge of birds and who has been
carefully tutored by Bryant to be cautious [guess]
in identification and in all things ornithological.
We had a very pleasant chat – about
people and birds and places. I asked
at the end how one went crake-hunting
(Bryant and Amos are the two people who
know most about these birds in Australia)
and Amos suggested I go out with
him next day. He had an injured
hand and was "off-work" indefinitely.

[7.7.49] so next morning I picked up Bruce, and
we went through Ivanhoe and Heidleberg* [Heidelberg],
through the grounds of Mont Park Mental
home to the large swamp of reeds. Nearby
was a flock of GALAHS – wild ones which
surprised me very much. To find a
very same bird in our district in the
outskirts of Melbourne is a bit of a
shock to the dignity!
It was at the this reed-bed in
the previous few season that Bryant +
Amos had studied and photographed
the Spotless Crake. So we waded in –
myself in borrowed sand-shoes and trousers.
In a spot that Amos considered
likely we trod out a "sight-line", trample
down the reeds some twenty 8 [guess] yards
in length and a foot or so wide. I
sat on dry reeds at one end and
Bruce stood at the other and we
waited. Down out of the wind it
was quite warm. All sounds from the
outer world were cut ~~short~~ out leaving

[7.7.49] only the sound of the reed-bed – the
rustle of the tops in the wind, the smallest
noises of water, the BLUE-WRENS, and
from time to time the varied calls of
the crakes themselves. Three calls were
heard – one like water entering the
submerged neck of a bottle (imitated by
the watchers in the hope of attracting them),
one like a motor-bike starting up and
a third rather like the call of a swan.
Eventually a bird poked its head
out and back – possibly a second's
view of a dark head and beady eye.
It was nearer Bruce than me so he
suggested extending the line break from
his end so that I could come nearer
the birds. He had just begun to
walk backwards, trampling the reeds when
he let out a call of dismay and
picked up from the water an egg. Another
was found nearby and above, a foot or
so up was a nest of thin reeds woven
round the stout stems of the large variety

[7.7.49] The nest was straightened and repaired as best I could the eggs dried, "polished" and replaced. It was an unusual date, an unusual situation and build of unusual materials for a SPOTLESS CRAKE. Bruce immediately went off to search the tussocks where they usually build, leaving me to watch. A bird came out, walked along the sight-line a yard and was off again into the reeds – perhaps two seconds. A little later a bird "flopped out" into the clearing and back into the reeds like a flash. And once more a birds beady eye was seen for a moment. Bruce returned having found nothing more of interest.

We left after two hours, with perhaps four seconds sight of a small black bird – and Bruce tells me that is "good watching" for Crakes!

24.7.49 (19) At 9.30 on a beautiful Sunday morning I set out with Michael to survey a swamp at Gerangamete

[24.7.49]. which I had seen from the road and which I thought may hold crakes of various descriptions. On the way, at Yeodene we saw a male FLAME ROBIN, and a pair of YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS, as well as a YELLOW ROBIN. Birds were heard but few were seen from the road.

The swamp appeared on close inspection to be apparently good for crakes. I did not know how deep it was but had a thick growth of stout reeds a foot or two high. Odd sounds issued forth of an unidentifiable creature – no crakes, naturally enough were seen. The only birds upon it were a few EASTERN SWAMPHEN and SPUR-WINGED PLOVER.

In the open trees in the surrounding paddocks were RAVENS, MAGPIE-LARKS, MAGPIES and many very noisy NOISY MINERS. Over the swamp low, darted SWALLOWS, and high, floated a pair of WHISTLING EAGLES.

[24.7.49] For the most part I carried Michael but
quite a part of the time he staggered
behind me, sitting down among the tussocks
or crying out for help from the midst of
a bramble thicket. So progress was slow
and I could do no more than walk
round and look for possibilities.

The very small Barwon R. flowed
past the far end. There were STRIATED
THORNBILLS and BLUE-WRENS, the latter sallying
forth into the reeds of the swamp. A few
RED-BROWED FINCHES mixed with the Wrens.
Near the river, in dead trees were
a KOOKABURRA, a pair of immature
CRIMSON ROSELLAS, and a pair of EASTERN
ROSELLA. So, slowly back to the
bush where GREY SHRIKE-THRUSHES and
WHITE-EARED HONEYEATERS were calling.

Anything but an exciting morning
but very good to get out into the
bush again and hear the birds calling
the first outing of the season. And we did
see a fox on the way home

13th August 1949.
(24)

I brought Bruce Amos back from Melbourne, the previous day and he had asked me to show him the Cape Barren Goose, Brolga, Bower-bird + Bristle-bird. A tall order in fact the first was quite out of the question. So we started off as soon as we could after lunch.

We made first for the bay on the west shore of L. Colac and then to the swamp at Balintore. Nothing of particular interest was seen – many COOTS, GREY TEALS and SILVER GULLS as well as a HOARY-HEADED GREBE, LITTLE PIED and LITTLE BLACK CORMORANTS, a few SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS, SWANS, MOUNTAIN DUCK, MUSK DUCK and SWALLOWS.

We then passed BULLOCK SWAMP on the way to Wool Wool – and there we saw a PALLID CUCKOO, an early bird. We visited the Gull rookery and saw the islands were well tenanted with gulls. So we waded out and found egg-laying had commenced – most nests had on

[13th August 1949] or two eggs, a few had three and
many were unfilled. So the day
was beginning to produce results. By
the lakes edge were RED-CAPPED DOTTERELS
and further away PIPITS and WHITE-FRONTED
CHATS and a single WHITE-FACED HERON.

Then we went on northwards
round the lake where we passed
WILLIE-WAGTAILS, many SCARLET ROBINS of
both sexes, MAGPIE-LARKS, a few YELLOW-
TAILED THORNBILLS and many RAVENS
and MAGPIES. We pulled up for tea
at the turn off to the Foxhow
rookery which I had supposed to
be untenanted for some time. However
when we put our glasses on it, it
was thick with gulls and also a
group of PELICANS were sitting in the
centre. So we hurried our tea
and drove more than half a mile
to the lake's edge.

We waded out and found
the island covered with nests in

[13th August 1949] a more advanced state – many more had three eggs in them. We marvelled at the variability of the eggs, in shape, size and colour – there were several "freak" eggs. In the centre of the island were twelve pelican's nests, ten with one egg and two with two eggs. The birds swam back and forth a hundred yards away. Also on the island were two Swan's nests, one with 5 eggs and one with three eggs. These birds kept well away from us on the water. We walked up and down looking at the large number of eggs and nests while the gulls screamed loudly above us. Finally as the light was beginning to go we left to wade back to the car.

It was getting dark so there was no point in going on round Lake Corangamite to Leslie Manor where we hoped to see the Brolgas. So we

[13th August 1949] came swiftly back on the Lismore –
Gressing Road. Bruce suddenly said
"What are they?" We found them
to be three Brolgas, busily feeding on
a ploughed field. We watched them
for a while and one of them even
did a few steps of its dance. Then
home – Bruce very pleased with
himself, and myself also, particularly
as I had been able to show him
one of his "requests."

14th August 1949 Bruce and I left at
(50) 7.15 am. for a "big day" – well
stocked with food. Ball's Dam was
passed as it was getting light and
we could see on it DUSKY MOORHEN,
EASTERN SWAMPHEN, LITTLE GREBE, SWANS and
a few MOUNTAIN DUCK. On through
Yeodene, where we saw the EASTERN
ROSELLA and NOISY MINERS, to the swamp
at Gerangamete which we inspected.
BUTCHER-BIRDS were calling as
well as the GREY SHRIKE-THRUSH. Bruce

[14th August 1949]. declared the swamp to be highly Crake-worthy.
We went slowly round it and saw
SWALLOWS flying everywhere over the water,
RAVENS and MAGPIES were in the gums in
the earthy paddock. On the swamp
were only a few mating SPUR-WINGED
PLOVERS and a few EASTERN SWAMPHEN.
When we had reached the other side
we got a good view of a BLACK-SHOULDERED
KITE, particularly when it alighted on
a limb. It was my first record
for the district and a good early
beginning for the day. As we went on
round a pair of LITTLE PIED CORMORANTS
flew over, three SWAMP HARRIERS beat up
and down the reeds, a WHITE-FACED HERON
croaked over us and a pair of BLACK
DUCK rose from the reeds, circled and
splashed down again. A STRIATED PARDALOTE
flew and disappeared into its nesting-hole.
Returning to car BRISTLE-BIRDS were calling
in the scrub. We did not see them then
or at any time that day but heard

[14th August 1949] them frequently throughout the trip. It was Bruce's first introduction to the bird. As we were about to get into the car a BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE flew off to the bush.

We then drove on through Forrest and Barramunga. CRIMSON ROSELLAS, GREY FANTAILS, YELLOW ROBIN, BLUE WRENS, BROWN THORNBILLS and BLUE WRENS were seen then as they were throughout most of the day. We stopped to admire an OLIVE WHISTLER in beautiful breeding plumage. Then the next excitement of the day was a pair of WHITE GOSHAWKS at Barramunga, quickly followed by another solitary bird. Bruce was thrilled, though the birds were a long way away. A MOUNTAIN THRUSH nearly ran under the car. We stopped at the sound of YELLOW-TAILED BLACK COCKATOOS but saw none. Several RED-BROWED FINCHES were seen but not in such number as usual in the

[14th August 1949]. rain forest. We went a few hundred yards down Turton's Track, had a cup of tea and returned to the main road and so down to Apollo Bay where of course were SILVER GULLS and far out to sea an Albatross.

Having filled the car with petrol, oil, water, fruit and chocolate we moved westwards on the Ocean Rd. We stopped at the house of a chap called Stones whom we were told could lead us to the bower-bird. He was an old chap who had lived in that part of the bush all his life and amused me by cursing the bower-birds which came into the house and soiled his floors and tables as well as scaring the cats out of their lives. For a month or two in the winter they made a nuisance of themselves in the early morning but a day or two previously they had departed and he could not say where they could be found. We passed the C. Otway turning and started to descend that lovely gully.

[14th August 1949] Two olive green birds attracted our
attention and though we were quickly out
of the car we saw no more of them.
So we went down to the Horden Vale
turning and returned up the gully. Then
we saw a flock of SATIN BOWER-BIRDS fly
up off the road into the scrub. We watched
then 8 – 10 females and one male in the
trees and they were off. We had lunch
at that spot hoping they would come down
again on the road. They did not
do so but we saw many other birds.
SCARLET, FLAME and a female ROSE ROBIN,
a GOLDEN WHISTLER, WHITE-EARED, CRESCENT and
YELLOW-WINGED HONEYEATERS were about and
Bruce heard the song of what he thought
was the BROWN-HEADED HONEYEATER.

After lunch a walk up the road
revealed that the flock was moving up
the gully, just keeping one bend of
the road ahead of the observers. Very
good views were obtained through they
were extremely timid and were of

[14th August 1949] into the scrub at the slightest warning. We
then went down the C. [Cape] Otway Rd to the
Blanket Bay turn off and followed it to
the Parker R. I meant to show Bruce
Beautiful Firetails where I had seen
them with Mrs Denny earlier in the
year. None were about – in fact it
was particularly birdless; all that was
seen here were KOOKABURRAS, WHITE-THROATED
TREE-CREEPERS, TREE MARTINS, WHITE-THROATED SCRUB-
WRENS, a RED WATTLE-BIRD and a GREY CURRAWONG.
We went on along the Blanket Bay
road which passed through heath land but
it soon got too much for the car and
we turned back.

Descending the gully again we
saw one female bower-bird. We talked
of walking on down but I plumped
for slowly going in the car. Round
the next bend the whole flock were
up like a shot and I could have
kicked myself! Then on through
the Aire R. flats where there were

[14th August 1949]. many YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS and
MAGPIE-LARKS were seen. Up the Laver's
Hill Rd where two of the black rabbits
were again seen to Ferguson and
down the Charley's Creek Rd. We stopped
at my spot by the old saw mill
and besides hearing the bristle bird
and a flock of WHITE-NAPED HONEYEATERS
we had nothing more to report before
arriving home at 6.15.

It was a highly successful
day – my reputation as a [?]
was growing, a day of light wind
and white clouds against a blue
sky.

– Bruce Amos' week around Colac.

Bruce had four more days to see
birds in. Monday morning (15th) was
wet and he walked through the gardens
+ down by the creek. He reported a party
of Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters which I saw
the next day. In the afternoon he went
out to Barangarook in to tea-tree swam

[14th August 1949] and through he heard the Bristle-bird did not see it.
Tuesday (16th) he spent at the 6 mile dam and
after much waiting saw the Bristle-bird. He
was also lucky to see the Beautiful Firetail.
Wednesday (17th) was spent on the Wonga track
where he saw three Quail-Thrushes as well
as more Bristle-birds. Thursday (18th) was wet
and he stayed in Colac but he did
see an English Song-Thrush, a new record
for Colac, right next door to Derrinook!

September 11th 1949. The Swamp. Gerangamete.

(28) It was a dull grey Sunday but not
cold when we decided to take the whole

[photo]

THE SWAMP – looking S-E.

[September 11th 1949] [photo]

The swamp – looking E.

family on a day's bird outing. We also
took Isobel White for company for Joan and
to take Michael off her hands occasionally.

On arrival many birds made
their presence obvious – NOISY MINERS, EASTERN
ROSELLAS, FAIRY MARTINS, SWALLOWS, GREY BUTCHER-
BIRDS, NATIVE THRUSHES, MAGPIES, MAGPIE-LARKS, RAVENS
and KOOKABURRAS. After depositing the family
I set off along the northern edge to reconnoitre
A pair of SWAMP HARRIERS were beating up and
down over the reeds, one twisting and tossing

[September 11th 1949] in the air in fantastic aerobatics. High above
the swamp on the dead limb of a tall tree sat
a ~~little p~~ LITTLE PIED CORMORANT and another
sat on a post in the swamp. A BLACK-
FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE was chased over the swamp
by a small bird. PALLID CUCKOOS were heard
in all directions. When I reached the Barwon
R. there were BLUE WRENS, BROWN THORNBILLS and
WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WRENS in large numbers
in the shrubs along the bank.

I crossed the river by a fallen tree
[photo]

The swamp – looking S-W.

[September 11th 1949] [photo]

Across the lower end of swamp (5) to trees lining the Barwon R.
to a broad flat stretch of 10 – 12 acres
covered in tussocks. It was full of
Blue Wrens and I also I heard a
thin dry call which I suspected was
the GOLDEN-HEADED FANTAIL-WARBLER. This was
confirmed when several birds flew up
and clung to the edges of tall stems
where they could be seen easily through
the glasses. It was my first encounter
with the birds in this district. As I
watched them my attention was drawn up

[11th September 1949] to a hawk hovering above the tussocks, moving forward and stopping, quite stationary in mid-air, just like a Kestrel but with slower wing-beats. It was a BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE probably the bird which was seen when I was there with Bruce Amos. It flew toward me and catching sight of me glided down directly at my head, passing a few feet above to continue its direct course onward to the trees lining the Barwon.

[photo]

Across the Barwon to S-E.

[11th September 1949] [photo]

Tussocky flats to the east of the
Barwon R. where the G-h Fantail Warblers were.
[line]
I crossed back to the other side of the
river and returned the way I had come.
A WHISTLING EAGLE flew high above the bush
and at the other end of the swamp, a
GREY CURRAWONG flew south along the
edge of the bush. A HERON flew up
in front of me from the tussocks.

After lunch I set out – again
on the same route, taking these photos
as I went. It was a grey day
and stopping down to f64 I gave a

[September 11th 1949] 1/5" [inch] exposure. Then I started to wade into the swamp. All went well for a while – the weed growth was very thick (probably too thick for any diving bird for none was seen – e.g. grebes) and by treading it down at each step one stood on a weed platform over the mud. It rapidly deepened until I was up to my thighs. EASTERN SWAMPHENS and BLACK DUCK were on the swamp, probably with nests and it was frustrating not to be able to search for them. SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS flew anxiously over – though they could not have been safer while I was in the swamp.

I returned and tried several entrances to the water but they were all too deep. Eventually I reached an island with tussocks and trees (having been severely bitten by a small water creature) but there was nothing in the tussocks. I climbed a tree and lay along a branch 20' [feet] above

[11th September 1949] the water where I could look down
and had a good view among
the reeds – no nests + no crakes. I lay
there for some time, listening to the
WHITE-EARED HONEYEATERS in the bush
behind and watching a pair of GANG-
GANGS and a solitary WHITE-COCKATOO
winging slowly south to the bush.
And that is all there was
for the day. A most unimpressive
total though the short time I spent
across the other side of the river was
well rewarded. However we did see
a WHITE IBIS on Ball's Dam on our
return.

November 2nd 1949. I left Lorne for the RAOU [Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union]
Congress and Camp at Hobart. Three whole
days had been spent at Lorne and little
hard work was done. A walk to Allenvale
and down the George R. with Joan and
Andy [guess] Newell produced a few birds – YELLOW
TAILED BLACK COCKATOO, GANG-GANGS, OLIVE WHISTLER and [guess]
some of the usual bush birds. A pair of KING

[November 2nd 1949] [KING] PARROTS were feeding in the gardens of the houses round toward the Pacific Hotel and excellent views of them were obtained. A few ALBATROSSES were seen out to sea and as far as could be determined two ROYAL ALBATROSSES were among them. There was a flock of CRESTED TERN on the rocks, and with them three SILVER GULLS. These were the only gulls seen during the whole time there despite the fact that the fishing fleet was at work and cleaning their fish at the pier. Michael learnt his first bird name – Kookaburra – which he said whenever it called and pronounced it well.

Slept on the 7.15 bus to Geelong – train to Melbourne + so to SAA. We had a good flight over above the clouds until we approached the Tasmanian coast when they cleared and we were able to see the country move slowly north below us. The clouds came down and the plane dropped lower and lower until it dodged between the mountains to land at Cambridge Aerodrome where a DOTTEREL flew off the runway.

[November 2nd 1949] Michael Sharland met me at TAA [Trans-Australia Airlines?] and I spent half-an-hour or so talking to him at Hadley's before dinner. Then Mr & Mrs Crosbie Morrison turned up, Mr & Mrs Bryant, Peter Moore from NSW, Max Bourne (SA [South Australia]), Carol Jackson (Melb [Melbourne]) ~~A~~ and Elou Prescott (Melb [Melbourne]) . We had dinner together and went off to the Museum where the Congress was opened by Lady Binney. She was followed by some excellent colour films of birds by Crosbie Morrison.

Nov 3rd 1949. The congress resumed at 10.00 am and adjourned at 10.45 for a civic reception by the Lord Mayor's deputy. The congress continued in the afternoon. In the evening we went to Michael Sharland's house for drinks and food. From there we went over to Miss Moseys where we were shown Norman Laird's colour film of the Macquarie Island expedition – unedited and the first ~~published~~ public showing of the film. It was a superb show and the highlight of the Congress to date.

Nov. 4th 1949. Congress resumed at 10.0 am
[?] general matters and took us to lunch.
The afternoon was free and the main
party walked through the [?] Gardens
and I had my first glimpse of
Tasmanian birds. SILVER GULLS and a
few PACIFIC GULLS were on the harbour, while
in the environs of Hobart were SPUR-WINGED
PLOVERS – allegedly the most common bird
in the country. Also seen were SWALLOWS,
PALLID CUCKOOS, YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS, SCARLET
ROBINS, PIPITS, STRIATED PARDALOTES, NOISY MINERS
RAVENS and DUSKY WOOD-SWALLOWS. A nest of
a BLACK-HEADED HONEYEATER was found in
the fringe of a gum, with the bird sitting.
Below the tree was found a dead
YELLOW-THROATED HONEYEATER. In the
flowering Blue Gums were several SWIFT
PARROTS. Introduced birds seen were
STARLINGS, SPARROWS, GOLDFINCHES and
BLACKBIRDS. The evening I spent at the
house of Len Wall whose mother is a
cousin of Alec Denis.

November 5th 1949. We embarked in a bus at 8.0 am and started up the Derwent Valley. We followed the wide, tidal river with its large bays. Roy Wheeler started a census and everyone was calling out bird names to him as we went. Spur-winged Plovers were plentiful and the TASMANIAN NATIVE HEN were frequently seen. EASTERN SWAMP-HEN and COOT were on the shores while on the water were LITTLE PIED CORMORANTS, SWANS, BLACK DUCK and CHESTNUT TEAL. Surprisingly on the reeds below the road two BITTERNS were seen, standing still with beak pointing skyward.

We went North west up the Derwent gradually rising in undulating country, and passing through Bridgewater, New Norfolk, Hamilton and Ouse. New Norfolk is a very typical English village with old parks. The country in fact was very English – orchards and hop-gardens with hawthorn hedges. Another feature were the poplar-hedges round some of the hop gardens. In this country were MAGPIES, SWAMP-HARRIERS, a BROWN HAWK, EASTERN

[FOLD OUT – map pasted onto page 104]

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[5th November 1949] ROSELLA, TREE-MARTIN, BLUE-WRENS, SKYLARK and the inevitable SPURWINGED PLOVER.

We stopped at Ouse for tea and cakes. A quick walk to the bridge found a flock of SILVEREYES, singing much more fully than I have heard them on the mainland. We did not follow the main West road from Ouse, because a truck had gone through one of the bridges. So we went an alternative route to Tarraleah, a large power station. This country became thickly wooded and the bus climbed in continuous twists. At Tarraleah the GREY FANTAIL was heard and the burrow of a SPOTTED PARDALOTE was found. The road led across the Plateau to Lake St Claire where we camped at Cynthia Bay. We settled in immediately to unpacking. I shared a large tent with Bill Middleton.

I walked south from the camp into button-grass swamps divided in an east-west direction by lines of trees growing on rocky moraines. FLAME ROBINS were

[5th November 1949] plentiful and singing very well – singing
much better than I have ever heard
them do on the mainland. Nests were
frequent in the vicinity of the camp. BLACK-FACED
CUCKOO-SHRIKES were heard as were NATIVE THRUSHES,
BROWN SCRUB-WRENS were calling and moving
quickly round the hut. CLINKING CURRAWONG
was seen down toward DERWENT BRIDGE. Also
seen and heard were the YELLOW WATTLE-BIRD,
BROWN THORNBILL, CRESCENT HONEYEATER, GREY BUTCHER-BIRD
GREEN ROSELLA, FANTAIL CUCKOO and PALLID CUCKOO.
Over the lake I was surprised to see a
WHITE-BREASTED SEA-EAGLE. In the evening a TAWNY
FROGMOUTH was seen flying round the camp.
In the evening a camp-fire was held and
Roy Wheeler, who had brought masses of
fireworks, distributed them and a "good
time was had by all."

November 6th 1949 The next morning I was not up
early and was surprised to find a cup
of tea and biscuit arrive at 7.0 am.
After breakfast most of us packed into the
launch and dingy (myself in the latter) and

[6th November 1949] went up the Lake to Narcissus Hut at the farther end. On the way up we saw in the bush on our left a BLACK CURRAWONG. Over the water were two Silver Gulls and a LARGE BLACK CORMORANT.

We had an early lunch at the hut and walked from there to Byron Pass, between Mt Byron and Mt Olympus. The first part of the track led through button-grass swamps until the foot of the mountain was reached. Then we entered beech (or myrtle) forest with a few very large E. [Eucalyptus] gigantea, many beeches and sassafras. The ground was firm and spongy with large numbers of decaying fallen logs and practically no undergrowth. A new bird seen on the way up was the SCRUB-TIT, a bird of quick noisy habits and a beautiful song. We had a superb view from the top and after half-an-hour started down again, passing the main party which was just arriving at the top of the pass. A little further down we found Peter Moore who had found the

[November 6th 1949] climb a bit much for him. He was
watching a BROWN SCUB-WREN carrying forth.
So we helped him in a search and
I soon found a nest with young on
the side of the bole of a large beech
among an outgrowth of green twigs.
The party was late getting back
and so by the time we were on the
water again, the temperature had dropped
and a very cold breeze had sprung
up. We were frozen by the time we
arrived at the camp. We went to bed
early.

November 7th 1949 I was out of bed at 5.0 am
and off along the track. I met Harold
Tair [guess] a little way down and we spent
the early morning together. First we came
across two OLIVE WHISTLERS singing well and
watched them for some time. Then in the ti-tree
by Cuvier R. were two male PINK ROBINS,
BLACK-HEADED HONEYEATERS were calling, and an
EASTERN SPINEBILL visited a tree above us. Over
to the left in the bush we could hear the

[November 7th 1949] call of the GOLDEN-BRONZE CUCKOO.

After breakfast a party set out for M[oun]t Rufous. It was a stiff climb through a mixed beech and eucalypt forest with the latter predominating. On the way up a FLAME ROBINS nest was found with young in the side of a fallen tree. A snake (Tiger) moved hurriedly off the path as I went up it. We had an early lunch and set off – the younger male members pushing ahead for ~~they~~ we expected to go on and come back a longer route. We soon got into the snow-gums and the climb became alternately steep and easy as we scrambled up ridges and crossed small plateaus. Then onto the final spur which still had snow lying on its sides and in which the two South Australians played happily.

The view from the top was magnificent and thoroughly photographed. There was not a breath of wind and a lighted match burned steadily. We then descended the farther spur, and made

[November 7th 1949] our way down to the right, passing
some large curiously shaped rocks, to
get to the shoulder between Mts Rufous
and Hugel. There Len Watts left us
to do a quick ascent of the nearest peak
of Mt Hugel and we descended the valley
between the two mountains, dropping swiftly
through snow gums and scattered beech to
the plateau of button grass and the Hugel
Lakes. A party of YELLOW-TAILED BLACK
COCKATOOS were feeding as we approached the
Hugel Hut.

There we boiled a billy (being males
we had carried all the food and equipment).
Then a little more button-grass and a
steep long descent through eucalypt forest
in the Cuvier Gorge to the lake side and
the camp. It had been a strenuous
day, not many birds, but a very good
strenuous relaxation.

November 8th 1949 Bill and I rose at 5.0 am
and walked along the road toward Derwent
Bridge. It was misty and quiet and we

[November 8th 1949] did not see much. We returned to camp, had a cup of tea and set off in the other direction. Birds were numerous and calling and we saw many. The only new one to the list was the GOSHAWK which was chasing and being chased by a BLACK CURRAWONG.

After breakfast I went off in the same direction – not more than a quarter of a mile from camp. For a long time I saw nothing of interest. Then a BLACK CURRAWONG flew onto a nest and fed its mate. Almost immediately a GREEN ROSELLA disappeared into a nesting hole. Then along the track a little a pair of BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKES charged out the nest 120' [feet] in a large gum.

In the afternoon Bill Middleton and I set off in the same direction as in the early morning. I at last caught up with the STRONG-BILLED HONEYEATER, which all members of the Camp but myself appeared to have

[November 8th 1949] seen. We walked to the shores of the lake. We thought we heard a Kookaburra calling (but were told that it was most unlikely) and saw marks in the mud which were probably made by a WHITE-FACED HERON.

In the evening we went up to Derwent Bridge and a Launceston man, Mr. King, showed coloured photos of birds. Some were excellent and he showed himself a first rate photographer. Some of the birds were held, tethered, injured and one was fairly obviously dead in the nest. Very good as the majority were, we were left with a slightly unpleasant taste in the mouth.

November 9th 1949 Early again this morning and out onto the button grass flats and moraines behind the camp which had been gaining a good reputation. I found many OLIVE WHISTLERS and led a party which was in search of them to the spot. We saw many and also had a good view of

[November 9th 1949] female GOLDEN WHISTLER in full song. There was also a pair of SATIN FLYCATCHERS, busy and excited. Also before we returned to breakfast we saw a CLINKING CURRAWONG'S nest.

In the morning Hugh Wilson, Lyn Veruden [guess] and I went round the edge of Cynthia Bay to the thick myrtle forests. Hugh had seen a black bird the previous day and we hoped to see it again. We made several circuits up into the forest and found a MOUNTAIN THRUSH ~~[?]~~ with food in its bill. We found in that vicinity an old nest on the top of the roots of an upturned tree. Also we found an old nest, in a sassafras, of a PINK ROBIN.

We returned in the afternoon to the same spot. We saw more MOUNTAIN THRUSHES and another old nest 6' [feet] on the bole of a beech. We caught no glimpse of the "black-bird" but had a good day in the most beautiful bush. After supper

[November 9th 1949] the Congress resumed with the President's Address and a paper by Hugh Wilson.

November 10th 1949 The weather to date had been perfect – blue clear skies except for two days – Mt Rufous & the Myrtle forest which were grey and mild. But this day is blustery and cloudy with occasional short very fine showers. It has not kept people in camp but I have seized the opportunity of a rest and to write up this diary, with a short walk before lunch.

It has been a most excellent camp – Charlie the cook giving large, well-cooked meals and contributing greatly to the well-being of all. The spirit of the camp is excellent with, as far as I know, not a temper frayed. The birds have not been numerous and have not quite given the excitement that camps in richer and more exotic places could have given. With the exception of the DUSKY ROBIN (which I

[November 10th 1949] yet hope to see) I have seen the twelve of the fourteen exclusively Tasmanian birds that one would expect. The TASMANIAN THORNBILL, if it exists, we have seen about us with the BROWN THORNBILL. On the other hand the animals have been good. An Echidna seen twice and Bennets' Wallaby, the Scrub Wallaby and the Rat Kangaroo all of which are tame and plentiful round the camp. The marks, droppings and burrows of the Wombat are very common in the bush. No sign of either Wild Cat has been seen but the droppings containing fur and crushed bone of the Tasmanian Devil are not uncommon on the tracks.

November 11th 1949. A large party were off early to Queenstown and the remainder were left to strike camp. Hearing that the Dusky Robin had been seen feeding young down by the power house, I set off in the morning along the path by the shore.

[November 11th 1949] It was warm and humid with light showers and my mackintosh was very hot wearing when walking fast. A Tasmanian Native Hen was seen in the swamp but very little else until I came on the DUSKY ROBIN – true to report – a young bird being fed! I walked down the access road to the main road and so back to camp.

In the afternoon we travelled back to Hobart by bus – I was tired and slept for about an hour but did pick up the ~~Hoary~~ HOARY-HEADED GREBE, BANDED PLOVER and REED-WARBLER. These, with a MUSK DUCK seen on L. St Claire early in the morning brought to completion the birds seen in Tasmania – 71 all together including 45 at L. St Claire.

[photo]

Hut – L. St Claire – Shared with Bill Middleton

[photo]

Shore of L St. Claire – Mt Rufous

[photo]

Our Hut – L. St Claire

[photo]

L. St. Claire – Mt Ida

[photo]

Mt Rufous from camp

[photo]

BUSH WALLABY – Camp.

[photo]

BENNET'S WALLABY – from the hut

[photo]

NARCISSUS RIVER

[photo]

TRACK LEADING TO BYRON GAP

from NARCISSUS HUT

[photo]

NEST OF BROWN ~~THORNBILL~~ SCRUB-WREN BY

TRACK to BYRON GAP

[photo]

[photo]

LOOKING NORTH FROM BYRON GAP

[photo]

MT BYRON

Bill Middleton + Len Wall

[photo]

MT OLYMPUS & SNOW GUMS

[photo]

S.W. from BYRON GAP

FRENCHMAN'S CAP in centre

– just topped with cloud.

127 [page number]

[photo]

SLOPES OF MT RUFOUS from track

[photo]

nearing summit – Mt RUFOUS

[photo]

S-W from Mt RUFOUS – FRENCHMAN'S CAP

[photo]

W ~~N.W~~ from Mt Rufous.

129 [page number]

[photo]

THE SPHYNX ROCK – MT RUFOUS.

[photo]

NW from MT RUFOUS – MT HUGEL on right

Howard Tarman.

[photo]

L. ST. CLAIRE – East from

MT. RUFOUS

27th November. The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria
(27) spent the weekend in the district when I was
asked to act as guide. They came up on
the Saturday (26th) and half stayed at the
Union [guess] Club and half went out to camp at
Red Rock. There were about 18 of them. On
Sunday morning I went out to Red Rock
about 9.30 am. taking Michael with me for
the day. There I found the party had
spent a good night among the pines
despite a high-wind and same heavy
showers. They had breakfasted on
mushrooms – some of the largest specimens
I have seen grew under the pines.

We walked to the top of the Rock. It
blew very strongly from the west – the
day was grey [crossed out] and [/crossed out] with a few
driving showers. In the pines were
very large numbers of GOLDFINCHES and
MAGPIES. On the lake below were
SWANS, COOTS, and MUSK DUCK. There were
about 12 of the latter and they were
diving – a surprising thing to do in

[27th November 1949] a lake which is reputed to be so
deep. A large flock of SWALLOWS
hawked on the steep lee side of the Rock.
I had intended to take them
to Foxhow and back through Leslie Manor
and Camperdown. But the bus had
not the petrol for that so we moved
through Alvie and stopped by the Lake
at Corunnun. There was not much
showing there – SWANS and GULLS on the
water, SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPERS and RED-CAPPED
DOTTEREL on the shore-line with PLOVER
and CHATS on the shore flats!
We moved on to the STONY RISES
where they had a stroll for an hour
before lunch. With Michael I could
not go far but the enforced stay
in the one spot found me EASTERN
ROSELLA'S nest and two nests of the NOISY
MINER. RAVENS, WHITE COCKATOOS and
a BLACK-FACED CUCKOO-SHRIKE were also
seen.
After lunch we moved on, turned

[November 27th 1949] left down to Swan Marsh, to Irrewillipe
and so along the back road to the
bush at Larpent. Here we had
another hours walk – Michael had gone
to sleep and I could accompany them.
The usual population was either seen or
heard – KOOKABURRA, GREY FANTAIL, PALLID
CUCKOO (in bush!) WHITE-EARED HONEYEATER, BLUE
WREN and YELLOW-ROBIN.

From there we came into Colac
via Simon's Hill and out on the Forest
road to Ball's Dam. There was
unfortunately nothing very interesting there –
LITTLE PIED CORMORANTS, MOUNTAIN DUCK, SWANS,
EASTERN SWAMP-HEN and COOTS. A SWAMP-
HARRIER beat up and down over a
paddock on the far side. REED WARBLERS
were singing in the reeds near the
road. We had an excellent view of
a pair of LITTLE GRASS-BIRDS calling and
collecting food for their family.

After a short speech of thanks
they drove on, and I took Michael home.

January 1st 1950.
(36)

Was the most superb day imaginable – hot with a cloudless sky and a soft west wind. In the morning I dropped Joan and the family with Kath Noble and set off on my wanderings, largely with the idea of taking photographs of the district with my old Kodak which I had just adjusted.

My first stop was at Warncoort where I took 3 photos of Mr Laurie Denis' front paddock as an example of open forest. Then up to Yeo where I took a long distance westerly photo of Ball's Dam. Of the dam itself I took 6 photos. Around the dam were the "regulars" – EASTERN SWAMPHEN, SPUR-WINGED PLOVER, WHITE-FACED HERON, a few BLACK DUCK LITTLE GREBE, LITTLE PIED CORMORANT, SWANS and SWAMP-HARRIER. Two other Raptors were the GOSHAWK and a WHISTLING EAGLE. I the reeds were the LITTLE-GRASSBIRD and the REED-WARBLER and as ever the air above was full of SWALLOWS.

[January 1st 1950] Then on through Yeo, occasionally photographing (the EASTERN ROSELLA and NOISY MINER as well as the YELLOW THORNBILL at the entrance to the bush) until I had almost reached Boundary Crk when across the road walked a very large Echidna. I stopped the car, and with the camera followed. When I got near it curled and started burrowing so I took a quick snap of it. It would not be dislodged so I set up the camera and went the length of my rubber tubing away and had lunch. Only BLUE WRENS and GREY FANTAILS were about. In some ¾ hr the Echidna did not budge so I took what remained in sight of it (precious little) and went on.

I turned down the Gerangamete Rd for ¼ mile and took 6 photos of the Barwon R. which is very beautiful there. Then a few hundred yards on the Forrest Rd and I stopped by the

[January 1st 1950] swamp which I am beginning to know so
well. I walked beside to the river and
there were NATIVE-THRUSHES, EASTERN ROSELLAS,
MAGPIES, MAGPIE-LARKS. I crossed and went
into the tussocks where I had heard the
Cisticola. I thought I saw them again
but on checking, they were EMU-WRENS!
Another satisfying find. By now my
back was beginning to feel the effect of
the sun and I returned to the car.

I retraced my steps, putting up
a BRONZEWING from the road, and
turned left on the Barongarook Rd. It
was very much a track, getting worse
as it went on, including detours in
the scrub to avoid deep ruts and
ruts in which the wheels had just
enough purchase to drag the belly of
the car along the ground. But I
got through and after paying a short
visit to Dave Lynch (and I had just
had wits about me to notice CRIMSON
ROSELLAS and YELLOW ROBINS in the bush).

[January 1st 1950] I went to Burton's Lookout for photos
and then on Barry's Rd to Barangarook
where I got a photo of the blackwoods
on the undulating country while a flock
of SPINE-TAILED SWIFTS whistled past, low
over head. I had tea at Larpent
but saw little and went on through
Irrewillipe to Swan Marsh (Skylarks) to
the large swamp in the Stony Rises
at Stoneyford.

I had had a report from
Harold Tarr of 3 Pied Geese there – most
unlikely. There were about 100 WHITE IBIS,
2 STRAW-NECKED IBIS, 1 YELLOW-BILLED SPOONBILL
1 WHITE EGRET and many WHITE-FACED HERON,
SPUR-WINGED PLOVER and EASTERN SWAMP-HEN.
No geese. In the Rises were BLACK-FACED
CUCKOO-SHRIKES, BROWN THORNBILLS, PALLID CUCKOOS,
YELLOW-FACED HONEYEATERS, STRIATED THORNBILLS and
a BOOBOOK OWL of which I had an
excellent view. And so, photographing
all the way, to Pirron Yallock and
home with the sun behind me.

February 1st 1950. At 3.10 in the afternoon Joan and I left Colac by car for our holiday. Our destination the first night was to be Ballarat. We passed north through Beeac and Cressy across flat plains to Rokewood. I kept my eyes open for [?] and Wild Turkeys but neither were seen. After Rokewood we climbed and soon got to Corindap *[Corindhap] where we were surprised to see a flock of SILVER GULLS. Then up, through cleared timber until we met large stretches of bush, with a most attractive gum red bark peeling from creamy boughs. It was here that we began to get doubts on the identity of the MAGPIES – many were very dark grey in the middle of the back and some had the ~~grey~~ black extending in from their wings. I think these must have been a hybrid population for when we went further north, such confusing birds were not seen.

The road deteriorated badly and

[February 1st 1950] it began to rain. The windscreen wiper began to wag and scarcely stopped during the next 48 hrs of travelling. We arrived in Ballarat just before 5.0 pm. and settled in for the night at Craig's Hotel where we had the 'royal suite'.

2/2/50 Before we left Ballarat next morning we visited the gardens where a flock of YELLOW-TAILED THORNBILLS were feeding busily about the entrance. We much admired their trees and not least their squirrels. Then off towards Daylesford though the most delightful bush of the same grown as the previous day. We stopped at Daylesford for a drink and something for lunch in the car. Then on to Kyneton where the country opened out into almost undulating parkland

From Kyneton we headed north through light bush through Redesdale to Heathcote and saw DUSKY-WOODSWALLOWS, RAVENS, EASTERN ROSELLAS, RED-BACKED PARROTS, NOISY MINERS,

[2/2/50] JACKY WINTERS, BROWN HAWK, flocks of
WHITE-WINGED CHOUGHS, WILLIE-WAGTAILS
SCARLET ROBINS, SWALLOWS, FAIRY MARTINS
a NATIVE THRUSH, BROWN TREE CREEPERS
and the all too numerous STARLINGS.
These birds were all seen frequently
throughout the whole open forest country
to Myrtleford.

North of Heathcote I was very
pleased to be able to show Joan a
small flock of GALAHS. Nearby was
also a flock of WHITE COCKATOOS, KOOKABURRAS,
PIPITS and MAGPIE-LARKS, were always
common. At Rushworth we met the
irrigation canals and turned right to
pass through beautiful open country in
which the scattered eucalypts looked
their best. On this part we saw the
WHITE-FACED HERON, a SACRED KINGFISHER,
SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS and a WHISTLING
EAGLE.

We filled with petrol at Murchison
and succeeded in getting onto the wrong

[2/2/50] road which took us to Tatura and so to Shepparton through miles of orchards and irrigation canals. KESTRELS and STRAW-NECKED IBIS joined my list.

From there the remainder of the day's run was on really beautiful roads lined by gums, to Benalla and up to Wangaratta. There we stayed at the Albion Hotel – which was spotlessly clean.

3-1-50. We set off from Wangaratta about 10.0 am, through Tarrawingee, Everton to Myrtleford. The Oven's Valley is a beautiful river flat, the course of the river marked by trees and the long straight road (very straight ~~for~~ for a river valley) lined by bluish gums and another whose upper limbs were a clean, white network. GREY-CROWNED BABBLERS, HORSEFIELD BUSHLARKS, RAINBOW BIRDS WHITE-PLUMED HONEYEATERS, a RESTLESS FLYCATCHER and BLUE WRENS were abundant.

From Porepunkah we turned south

[3.1.50] on the Mt Buffalo road and when
we entered the bush there were
RED-BROWED FINCHES, CRIMSON ROSELLAS
and YELLOW ROBINS. We climbed up
and up and twisted round hairpins,
climbing up into the misty wet
bush. There was just a glimpse
of a GANG-GANG and two GREY
CURRAWONGS. Then over the rim of
the plateau, we splashed down a
wet saucer of a road to the chalet,
where we were given a late lunch
To date and spent the rest of the day resting
40 (6) and reading.
February 4th Opened with the mountain in a
cloud and the rain alternating between
a downpour and a drizzle. However
we put on our heavy footwear and
our waterproofs and ventured forth on
the road round L. Catani. It was calm
and the moisture and dripping bush
was, in its way, pleasant. We soon
ran into the honeyeaters, the WHITE-EARED +

[February 4th] the EASTERN SPINEBILL as well as the White-naped, and the SINGING ~~and the WHITE EARE~~ which we had already seen. STRIATED THORNBILLS were also seen. We followed the road round to the Lake on which were four BLACK DUCK and on the flats around it were BLACK-BACKED MAGPIES.

On the further side of the lake, an AUSTRALIAN GOSHAWK flew from perch to perch along the road in front of us for about half a mile. It was evidently a young bird with white on the shoulders and on the head. We struck off the road to our right and climbed the Monolith, a tall precariously balanced rock up which led steps. But it was misty and we saw nothing. We came down and within about half-a mile were back at the chalet.

We rested early in the afternoon and after tea went to the various look-outs around the gorge. The cloud was being blown away and the valley floor

[February 4th] opened up beneath us. It was a
deep bluey-grey under the shadows
of the clouds. Later the sun shone
through to dapple the forests with
the evening light but the clouds never
lifted high enough to give us a
view of the mountains.

We visited various views
of the Gorge and Lookouts over the
valley to the east and north – Wilkinson's,
Reed's and Manfield's. At the latter we
saw a large family of GREY FANTAILS
and a fleeting glance of a WHITE-BROWED
SCRUB-WREN. We arrived back, very
lost, at the Chalet, but were pleased
that the weather showed signs of clearing.

P.S. I forgot to mention that at
the Monolith two new birds were seen -
50 the RED WATTLE-BIRD and the RED-TIPPED
(20) PARDALOTE.
6.2.50. In the morning we took the car to
the reservoir and made for Og, Gog, + Magog.
After a temporary set back by taking

[6.2.50] the wrong path we climbed up to the three large (ungodlike [guess]) stones. On the way I add to my list for the plateau the BROWN HAWK, the SCARLET ROBIN and the KESTREL. At the tip was a flock of SILVEREYES. We then descended on the other side a steep path among snow-gums which reminded me greatly of the track down from the saddle between Mt Rufous and Mt Hugel to the Hugel Lakes (p.110). Then, striking left round the base of the mountain we went to the head of the reservoir and on to Mt Dunne.

The path led round the foot of this for more than half the circle before we came to the track up. It was a steep climb and at the top we found Dick + Pam Darling, boiling their billy. It was the best view we had obtained so far of the whole plateau and Alps. We made a quick descent (seeing a few BROWN THORNBILLS which were new to the plateau) and walked to our car and so back for Sunday dinner.

[6.2.50] In the afternoon I went down on
the track to the Underground Rivers
and sat about, watched and listened.
And I heard, the White-throated
Tree-creeper, the Fantail-Cuckoo and
the PILOT BIRD.
After afternoon tea Joan and
I followed the same path and went
55 on to the View Point which gave a
(28) very good view of the Buckland Valley.
6.2.50. We set off again in the
car, and taking the road to the
Horn, we stopped below the Cathedral
and the Hump. The latter we
climbed and got the finest view
we have yet seen – only the Horn
itself rising above the skyline. On our
return we attempted to climb the
Cathedral, but we were not good
enough climbers and had to give
up. On the way down we passed
an escorted tour going up to the Hump.
We drove back about half-a-mile

[6.2.50] and had our lunch. There Joan
relaxed for the rest of the afternoon
while I wander about watching and
listening to birds but found nothing
new for the day. It began to
55 rain as we drove back for an
(28) early bath and change.
7.2.50. We took the car to L. Catani and
walked off left to the Chalwell Galleries. We
climbed about the rocks and then just
sat quietly, appreciating the bush and
the still warm gray day. As we sat
there I commented that a Native Thrush
had a higher pitched more staccato
call than ours. Then came the single
call of a Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoo,
then a variety of calls. Joan commented
that it sounded just like the jungle. That
remark "clicked" and I realised we
were listening to a LYREBIRD. In quick
succession it imitated, as well, the
Grey Currawong, Kookaburra, Crimson Rosella
and Pilot Bird. I scrambled about

[7.2.50] trying to get a view of it and when
eventually I did I saw only its
fleeting form disappearing up a gully.
It began to rain and we
57 returned to the car and read till
(28) lunch. The afternoon we rested.
8.2.50 We took the car up to
the far end of the plateau, as far
as we could on the road to the
Horn. The road was under
repair and we walked the last
mile. There was a large flock
of RAVENS round the summit perching
on the dead white snow gums and
tossing themselves in the up breeze
of the cliffs. At the end of the
road we looked out across a chasm.
Kestrels were wheeling round and
lot of PIED CURRAWONGS floated about
the precipices, their eiry*[eerie] call floating
up to us. The pinnacle of the
Horn was wracked in tearing [guess] wind
and mist. Occasionally there would

[8.2.50] be a break and the plateau about us
would be glimpsed.
The afternoon we spent on the
Le Souef plateau but the tracks were
scarcely formed and the foliage was
T8 wet so that we got soaking as we
(31) pushed our way through.
9.2.50 We went, believe it or not, on
a whole-day horse ride to the Nth
Buffalo Plateau. The party consisted of
Seven, plus the guide, Ernie, and his
son. We went out on the track past
Og, Gog and Magog where we had been
confused before. Down over a saddle
and up on to the plateau. We went
down to a gully where there was
water for lunch. Ernie built a
large fire and we waited ¾ hour
While it burnt down to coals. Then
steak and chops [guess] liberally covered with
salt, pepper and sugar were placed
over it on wire netting and kept
turned. They were absolutely

[9.2.50] delicious. Then tomatoes were put on, cut in half, with the cut face towards and covered with butter + sugar. It was really a meal to remember.

Then we struck up the hill. A female SATIN FLYCATCHER had called around the camp-site. We went right along the ridge, the horses straining up the steep slopes and slipping and [?] on the rocks. The end of our trip – Bald Hill – we sat and looked out over the whole county to the south and west. A WEDGE-TAILED EAGLE soared past us and then floated up and up, many thousands of feet before gliding straight as a die to the west.

We turned for home the journey becoming more painful with
60 every step until we dismounted
(23) [guess] stiff and aching after a day which was very well worth it.

[table]

PAGE	DATE	LOCALITY
1	25.9.48	Nangana
6	26.9.48	Morning — Wool Wool, L. Corangamite
		Afternoon — Gellibrand.
13	10.10.48	Ball's Dam, Warncoort.
15	13.10.48	Colac, Mortlake, Hamilton, Casterton, Langkoop.
18	14.10.48	Langkoop.
21	15.10.48	Langkoop.
25	16.10.48	Langkoop.
27	17.10.48	Langkoop — Mt Gambier — Colac
29		Langkoop PHOTOGRAPHS
33	5.11.48	Ball's Dam.
34	6.11.48	Ball's Dam.
36	13.11.48	The Point, Colac.
38	19.11.48	Melbourne to Merricks
39	20.11.48	Merricks
43	21.11.48	Merricks, to Melbourne.
45	4.12.48	Turkeith
47	5.12.48	Turkeith
49	14.12.48	Colac — Johanna [River]
51	18.1.49	Cororooke + Balintore swamps
52	20.1.49	Ball's Dam

[/table]

[table]

PAGE	DATE	LOCALITY	
54	27.1.49	Ball's Dam	
55	12.2.49	Glen Aire — C[ape] Otway.	
58	13.2.49	Hordern Vale.	
60	2.3.49	Colac — Camperdown — Derrinallum	
61	3.3.49	Colac — Camperdown — Leslie Manor.	
63	12.3.49	Lava Lake — Wooloomanata — Anakie.	
68	10.4.49	Lorne — Airey's Inlet	
70	20.4.49	Review of 1948-9 season	
72	28-29.5.49	Lorne — Apollo Bay (fishing) — Forrest — Colac.	
77	7.7.49	Mont Park — Crake-hunting with Bruce Amos	
80	24.7.49	Gerangamete — the swamp.	
83	13.8.49	Wool-Wool — Foxhow (Bruce Amos)	
86	14.8.49	Gerangamete — Apollo Bay — Lavers Hill — Gellibrand	
[92	15-18.8.49	Bruce Amos around Colac] (Bruce Amos).	
93	11.9.49	Gerangamete	PHOTOS
100	2.11.49	Lorne : Lorne — Hobart	
102	3.11.49	Hobart — Congress	
103	4.11.49	Hobart — Congress	
104	5.11.49	Hobart — Lake St Claire* [Clair]	
106	6.11.49 L.	St Claire* [Clair] — Narcissus Hut + Byron Gap	
108	7.11.49 L.	St Claire* [Clair] — Mt Rufous* [Mt. Rufus]	

[/table]

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PAGE	DATE	LOCALITY
100	8-11-49	L. St Claire* [Clair] – near the camp
112	9-11-49	L. St Claire* [Clair] – the myrtle forests
114	10-11-49	L. St Claire* [Clair] – at camp
115	11-11-49	L. St Claire* [Clair] – Hobart
117-30		PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING CAMP
131	27-11-49	Red Rock, Stony Rises, Larpent, Ball's Dam, F.N.C.V.
134	1-01-50	Yeo [Yeodene], Gerangamete, Barongarook, Irrewillipe, Stony Rises
138	1-02-50	Colac – Ballarat
139	2-02-50	Ballarat – Daylesford – Kyneton – Heathcote – Rushworth – Murchison – Tatura – Shepparton – Benalla – Wangaratta
141	3-02-50	Wangaratta – Myrtleford – Porepunkah – Mt Buffalo
142	4-02-50	Mt Buffalo – L. Catani + Monoliths: Lookouts
144	5-02-50	Mt Buffalo – Og, Gog, Magog, Mt Dunne [Dunn]: Underground R. View Point
146	6-02-50	Mt Buffalo – The Hump + Cathedral
147	7-02-50	Mt Buffalo – Chalwell Galleries
148	8-02-50	Mt Buffalo – The Horn : Le Souef Plateau
149	9-02-50	Mt Buffalo – Horses – the North Buffalo Plateau

[/table]

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[Coloured illustration of two green budgerigars]

[Artist signature] N. W. [Neville William] Cayley [/artist signature]